John MILTON
Paradise Regain'd
First edition London 1671.

With the rare cancel leaf N3
in Samson Agonistes
Errata uncorrected:
3,500.

Licensed,

July 2. 1670.

PARADISE REGAIND.

A

POEM.

In IV *BOOKS.*

To which is added

SAMSON AGONISTES.

The Author

JOHN MILTON.

LONDON,

Printed by *J. M.* for *John Starkey* at the *Mitre* in *Fleetstreet*, near *Temple-Bar.*

MDCLXXI.

PARADISE REGAIN'D,
A POEM.

The First BOOK.

I Who e're while the happy Garden sung,
By one mans disobedience lost, now sing
Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
By one mans firm obedience fully tri'd
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls't,
And *Eden* rais'd in the wast Wilderness.
Thou Spirit who ledst this glorious Eremite

Into the Desert, his Victorious Field
Against the Spiritual Foe, and brought'st him thence
By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompted Song else mute,
And bear through highth or depth of natures bound
With prosperous wing full summ'd to tell of deeds
Above Heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an Age,
Worthy t' have not remain'd so long unsung.

Now had the great Proclaimer with a voice
More awful then the sound of Trumpet, cri'd
Repentance, and Heavens Kingdom nigh at hand
To all Baptiz'd: to his great Baptism flock'd
With aw the Regions round, and with them came
From *Nazareth* the Son of *Joseph* deem'd
To the flood *Jordan*, came as then obscure,
Unmarkt, unknown; but him the Baptist soon
Descri'd, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resign'd

To him his Heavenly Office, nor was long
His witness unconfirm'd: on him baptiz'd
Heaven open'd, and in likeness of a Dove
The Spirit descended, while the Fathers voice
From Heav'n pronounc'd him his beloved Son.
That heard the Adversary, who roving still
About the world, at that assembly fam'd
Would not be last, and with the voice divine
Nigh Thunder-struck, th' exalted man, to whom
Such high attest was giv'n, a while survey'd
With wonder, then with envy fraught and rage
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
To Council summons all his mighty Peers,
Within thick Clouds and dark ten-fold involv'd,
A gloomy Consistory; and them amidst
With looks agast and sad he thus bespake.

O ancient Powers of Air and this wide world,
For much more willingly I mention Air,
This our old Conquest, then remember Hell

Our hated habitation; well ye know
How many Ages, as the years of men,
This Universe we have possest, and rul'd
In manner at our will th'affairs of Earth,
Since *Adam* and his facil consort *Eve*
Lost Paradise deceiv'd by me, though since
With dread attending when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the Seed of *Eve*
Upon my head, long the decrees of Heav'n
Delay, for longest time to him is short;
And now too soon for us the circling hours
This dreaded time have compast, wherein we
Must bide the stroak of that long threatn'd wound,
At least if so we can, and by the head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infring'd, our freedom and our being.
In this fair Empire won of Earth and Air;
For this ill news I bring, the Womans seed
Destin'd to this, is late of woman born,

His birth to our just fear gave no small cause,
But his growth now to youths full flowr, displaying
All vertue, grace and wisdom to atchieve
Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim
His coming, is sent Harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the Consecrated stream
Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them so
Purified to receive him pure, or rather
To do him honour as their King; all come,
And he himself among them was baptiz'd,
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
The testimony of Heaven, that who he is
Thenceforth the Nations may not doubt; I saw
The Prophet do him reverence, on him rising
Out of the water, Heav'n above the Clouds
Unfold her Crystal Dores, thence on his head
A perfect Dove descend, what e're it meant,
And out of Heav'n the Sov'raign voice I hear',

This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd.
His Mother then is mortal, but his Sire,
He who obtains the Monarchy of Heav'n,
And what will he not do to advance his Son?
His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep;
Who this is we must learn, for man he seems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpses of his Fathers glory shine.
Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
But must with something sudden be oppos'd,
Not force, but well couch't fraud, well woven snare
E're in the head of Nations he appear
Their King, their Leader, and Supream on Earth.
I, when no other durst, sole undertook
The dismal expedition to find out
And ruine *Adam*, and the exploit perform'd
Successfully; a calmer voyage now

Will waft me; and the way found prosperous once
Induces best to hope of like success.
He ended, and his words impression left
Of much amazement to th' infernal Crew,
Distracted and surpriz'd with deep dismay
At these sad tidings; but no time was then
For long indulgence to their fears or grief:
Unanimous they all commit the care
And management of this main enterprize
To him their great Dictator, whose attempt
At first against mankind so well had thriv'd
In *Adam*'s overthrow, and led thir march
From Hell's deep-vaulted Den to dwell in light,
Regents and Potentates, and Kings, yea gods
Of many a pleasant Realm and Province wide.
So to the Coast of *Jordan* he directs
His easie steps; girded with snaky wiles,
Where he might likeliest find this new-declar'd,
This man of men, attested Son of God,

Temptation and all guile on him to try;
So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
To end his Raign on Earth so long enjoy'd:
But contrary unweeting he fulfill'd
The purpos'd Counsel pre-ordain'd and fixt
Of the most High, who in full frequence bright
Of Angels, thus to *Gabriel* smiling spake.
Gabriel this day by proof thou shalt behold,
Thou and all Angels conversant on Earth
With man or mens affairs, how I begin
To verifie that solemn message late,
On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure
In *Galilee*, that she should bear a Son
Great in Renown, and call'd the Son of God;
Then toldst her doubting how these things could
To her a Virgin, that on her should come
The Holy Ghost, and the power of the highest
O're-shadow her: this man born and now up-grown
To shew him worthy of his birth divine

And high prediction, henceforth I expose
To Satan; let him tempt and now assay
His utmost subtilty, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his Apostasie; he might have learnt
Less over-weening, since he fail'd in *Job*,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate're his cruel malice could invent.
He now shall know I can produce a man
Of female Seed, far abler to resist
All his sollicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell,
Winning by Conquest what the first man lost
By fallacy surpriz'd. But first I mean
To exercise him in the Wilderness,
There he shall first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, e're I send him forth
To conquer Sin and Death the two grand foes,
By Humiliation and strong Sufferance:

His weakness shall o'recome Satanic strength
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
That all the Angels and Ætherial Powers,
They now, and men hereafter may discern,
From what consummate vertue I have chose
This perfect Man, by merit call'd my Son,
To earn Salvation for the Sons of men.

So spake the Eternal Father, and all Heaven
Admiring stood a space, then into Hymns
170 Burst forth, and in Celestial measures mov'd,
Circling the Throne and Singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument.

Victory and Triumph to the Son of God
Now entring his great duel, not of arms,
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles.
The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial Vertue, though untri'd,
Against whate're may tempt, whate're seduce,
Allure, or terrifie, or undermine.

Be frustrate all ye stratagems of Hell,
And devilish machinations come to nought.

So they in Heav'n their Odes and Vigils tun'd:
Mean while the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodg'd in *Bethabara* where *John* baptiz'd,
Musing and much revolving in his breast,
How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his God-like office now mature,
One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading;
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse
With solitude, till far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He entred now the bordering Desert wild,
And with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
His holy Meditations thus persu'd.

O what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awakn'd in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel my self, and hear

What

What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compar'd.
When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing, all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be publick good; my self I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things: therefore above my years,
The Law of God I read, and found it sweet,
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that e're yet my age
Had measur'd twice six years, at our great Feast
I went into the Temple, there to hear
The Teachers of our Law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own
And was admir'd by all, yet this not all
To which my Spirit aspir'd, victorious deeds
Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts, one while
To rescue *Israel* from the *Roman* yoke,

Then to subdue and quell o're all the earth
Brute violence and proud Tyrannick pow'r,
Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd:
Yet held it more humane, more heavenly first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make persuasion do the work of fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring Soul
Not wilfully mis-doing, but unware
Misled; the stubborn only to destroy.
These growing thoughts my Mother soon perceiving
By words at times cast forth inly rejoyc'd,
And said to me apart, high are thy thoughts
O Son, but nourish them and let them soar
To what highth sacred vertue and true worth
Can raise them, though above example high;
By matchless Deeds express thy matchless Sire.
For know, thou art no Son of mortal man,
Though men esteem thee low of Parentage,
Thy Father is the Eternal King, who rules

All Heaven and Earth, Angels and Sons of men,
A messenger from God fore-told thy birth
Conceiv'd in me a Virgin, he fore-told
Thou shouldst be great and sit on *David's* Thro
And of thy Kingdom there should be no end.
At thy Nativity a glorious Quire
Of Angels in the fields of *Bethlehem* sung
To Shepherds watching at their folds by night,
And told them the Messiah now was born,
Where they might see him, and to thee they ca
Directed to the Manger where thou lais't,
For in the Inn was left no better room:
A Star, not seen before in Heaven appearing
Guided the Wise Men thither from the East,
To honour thee with Incense, Myrrh, and Gold,
By whose bright course led on they found the p
Affirming it thy Star new grav'n in Heaven,
By which they knew thee King of *Israel* born.
Just *Simeon* and Prophetic *Anna*, warn'd

By Vision, found thee in the Temple, and spake
Before the Altar and the vested Priest,
Like things of thee to all that present stood.
This having heard, strait I again revolv'd
The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ
Concerning the Messiah, to our Scribes
Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake
I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie
Through many a hard assay even to the death,
E're I the promis'd Kingdom can attain,
Or work Redemption for mankind, whose sins
Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
Yet neither thus disheartn'd or dismay'd,
The time prefixt I waited, when behold
The Baptist, (of whose birth I oft had heard,
Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come
Before Messiah and his way prepare.
I as all others to his Baptism came,
Which I believ'd was from above; but he

Strait

Strait knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd
Me him (for it was shew'n him so from Heaven)
Me him whose Harbinger he was; and first
Refus'd on me his Baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won;
But as I rose out of the laving stream,
Heaven open'd her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a Dove,
And last the sum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from Heav'n, pronounc'd me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleas'd; by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes
The Authority which I deriv'd from Heaven.
And now by some strong motion I am led
Into this Wilderness, to what intent
I learn not yet, perhaps I need not know;
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.

So spake our Morning Star then in his rise,
And looking round on every side beheld
A pathless Desert, dusk with horrid shades;
The way he came not having mark'd, return
Was difficult, by humane steps untrod;
And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
Accompanied of things past and to come
Lodg'd in his breast, as well might recommend
Such Solitude before choicest Society.
Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient Oak,
Or Cedar, to defend him from the dew,
Or harbour'd in one Cave, is not reveal'd;
Nor tasted humane food, nor hunger felt
Till those days ended, hunger'd then at last
Among wild Beasts: they at his sight grew mild,
Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd, his walk
The fiery Serpent fled, and noxious Worm,

The Lion and fierce Tiger glar'd aloof.
But now an aged man in Rural weeds,
Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray Ew
Or wither'd sticks to gather; which might serve
Against a Winters day when winds blow keen,
To warm him wet return'd from field at Eve,
He saw approach, who first with curious eye
Perus'd him, then with words thus utt'red spake.
Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this pla
So far from path or road of men, who pass
In Troop or Caravan, for single none
Durst ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
His Carcass, pin'd with hunger and with droughth
I ask the rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late
Our new baptizing Prophet at the Ford
Of *Jordan* honour'd so, and call'd thee Son
Of God; I saw and heard, for we sometimes
Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want, come for
T

To Town or Village nigh (nighest is far)
Where ought we hear, and curious are to hear,
What happ'ns new; Fame also finds us out.
To whom the Son of God. Who brought me hither
Will bring me hence, no other Guide I seek.
By Miracle he may, reply'd the Swain,
What other way I see not, for we here
Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inur'd
More then the Camel, and to drink go far,
Men to much misery and hardship born;
But if thou be the Son of God, Command
That out of these hard stones be made thee bread;
So shalt thou save thy self and us relieve
With Food, whereof we wretched seldom taste.
He ended, and the Son of God reply'd.
Think'st thou such force in Bread? is it not written
(For I discern thee other then thou seem'st)
Man lives not by Bread only, but each Word
Proceeding from the mouth of God; who fed

Our Fathers here with Manna; in the Mount
Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank,
And forty days *Eliah* without food
Wandred this barren waste, the same I now:
Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?

Whom thus answer'd th' Arch Fiend now undi(guis'd
'Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate,
Who leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt
Kept not my happy Station, but was driv'n
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,
Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd
By rigour unconniving, but that oft
Leaving my dolorous Prison I enjoy
Large liberty to round this Globe of Earth,
Or range in th' Air, nor from the Heav'n of Heav'n
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
I came among the Sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands *Uzzean Job*

To prove him, and illustrate his high worth;
And when to all his Angels he propos'd
To draw the proud King *Ahab* into fraud
That he might fall in *Ramoth*, they demuring,
I undertook that office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering Prophets glibb'd with lyes
To his destruction, as I had in charge.
For what he bids I do; though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be belov'd of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or vertuous, I should so have lost all sense.
What can be then less in me then desire
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent
Thy wisdom, and behold thy God-like deeds?
Men generally think me much a foe
To all mankind: why should I? they to me

Never did wrong or violence, by them
I loſt not what I loſt, rather by them
I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell
Copartner in theſe Regions of the World,
If not diſpoſer; lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice by preſages and ſigns,
And anſwers, oracles, portents and dreams,
Wherbey they may direct their future life.
Envy they ſay excites me, thus to gain
Companions of my miſery and wo.
At firſt it may be; but long ſince with wo
Never acquainted, now I feel by proof,
That fellowſhip in pain divides not ſmart,
Nor lightens aught each mans peculiar load.
Small conſolation then, were Man adjoyn'd:
This wounds me moſt (what can it leſs) that Man,
Man fall'n ſhall be reſtor'd, I never more.

To whom our Saviour ſternly thus reply'd.
Deſervedly thou griev'ſt, compos'd of lyes
From

From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
Who boaſt'ſt releaſe from Hell, and leave to come
Into the Heav'n of Heavens; thou com'ſt indeed,
As a poor miſerable captive thrall,
Comes to the place where he before had ſat
Among the Prime in Splendour, now depos'd,
Ejected, emptyed, gaz'd, unpityed, ſhun'd,
A ſpectacle of ruin or of ſcorn
To all the Hoſt of Heaven; the happy place
Imports to thee no happineſs, no joy,
Rather inflames thy torment, repreſenting
Loſt bliſs, to thee no more communicable,
So never more in Hell then when in Heaven.
But thou art ſerviceable to Heaven's King.
Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleaſure to do ill excites?
What but thy malice mov'd thee to miſdeem
Of righteous *Job*, then cruelly to afflict him
With all inflictions, but his patience won?

The

The other service was thy chosen task,
To be a lyer in four hundred mouths;
For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
Yet thou pretend'st to truth; all Oracles
By thee are giv'n, and what confest more true
Among the Nations? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing somewhat true to vent more lyes.
But what have been thy answers, what but dark
Ambiguous and with double sense deluding,
Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
And not well understood as good not known?
Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct
To flye or follow what concern'd him most,
And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
For God hath justly giv'n the Nations up
To thy Delusions; justly, since they fell
Idolatrous, but when his purpose is
Among them to declare his Providence

To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
But from him or his Angels President
In every Province, who themselves disdaining
To approach thy Temples, give thee in command
What to the smallest tittle thou shalt say
To thy Adorers; thou with trembling fear,
Or like a Fawning Parasite obey'st;
Then to thy self ascrib'st the truth fore-told.
But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd;
No more shalt thou by oracling abuse
The Gentiles; henceforth Oracles are ceast,
And thou no more with Pomp and Sacrifice
Shalt be enquir'd at *Delphos* or elsewhere,
At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
God hath now sent his living Oracle
Into the World, to teach his final will,
And sends his Spirit of Truth henceforth to dwell
In pious Hearts, an inward Oracle
To all truth requisite for men to know.

So

So ſpake our Saviour; but the ſubtle Fiend,
Though inly ſtung with anger and diſdain,
Diſſembl'd, and this Anſwer ſmooth return'd.
Sharply thou haſt inſiſted on rebuke,
And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will
But miſery hath reſted from me; where
Easily canſt thou find one miſerable,
And not inforc'd oft-times to part from truth;
If it may ſtand him more in ſtead to lye,
Say and unſay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
But thou art plac't above me, thou art Lord;
From thee I can and muſt ſubmiſs endure
Check or reproof, and glad to ſcape ſo quit.
Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
Smooth on the tongue diſcourſt, pleaſing to th'ear
And tuneable as Silvan Pipe or Song;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth? moſt men admir
Vertue, who follow not her lore: permit me

'o hear thee when I come (ſince no man comes)
nd talk at leaſt, though I deſpair to attain.
'hy Father, who is holy, wiſe and pure,
uffers the Hypocrite or Atheous Prieſt
'o tread his Sacred Cour s, and miniſter
bout his Altar, handling holy things,
'raying or vowing, and vouchſaf'd his voice
'o *Balaam* Reprobate, a Prophet yet
nſpir'd; diſdain not ſuch acceſs to me.
To whom our Saviour with unalter'd brow.
'hy coming hither, though I know thy ſcope,
bid not or forbid; do as thou find'ſt
'ermiſſion from above; thou canſt not more.
He added not; and Satan bowing low
Iis gray diſſimulation, diſappear'd
nto thin Air diffus'd: for now began
Night with her ſullen wing to double-ſhade
The Deſert, Fowls in thir clay neſts were couch't;
And now wild Beaſts came forth the woods to roam.

The End of the Firſt Book.

PARADISE REGAIN

The Second BOOK.

MEan while the new-baptiz'd, who yet rem
At *Jordan* with the Baptist, and had see
Him whom they heard so late expresly call'd
Jesus Messiah Son of God declar'd,
And on that high Authority had believ'd,
And with him talkt, and with him lodg'd, I mea
Andrew and *Simon*, famous after known
With others though in Holy Writ not nam'd,
Now missing him thir joy so lately found,
10 So lately found, and so abruptly gone,
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,

And as the days increas'd, increas'd thir doubt:
Sometimes they thought he might be only shewn,
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the Mount, and missing long;
And the great *Thisbite* who on fiery wheels
Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come.
Therefore as those young Prophets then with care
Sought lost *Eliah*, so in each place these
Nigh to *Bethabara*; in *Jerico*
The City of Palms, *Ænon*, and *Salem* Old,
Machærus and each Town or City wall'd
On this side the broad lake *Genezaret*,
Or in *Perea*, but return'd in vain.
Then on the bank of *Jordan*, by a Creek:
Where winds with Reeds, and Osiers whisp'ring play
Plain Fishermen, no greater men them call,
Close in a Cottage low together got
Thir unexpected loss and plaints out breath'd.
Alas, from what high hope to what relapse

Un-

Unlook'd for are we fall'n, our eyes beheld
Messiah certainly now come, so long
Expected of our Fathers; we have heard
His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth,
Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand,
The Kingdom shall to *Israel* be restor'd:
Thus we rejoyc'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
Into perplexity and new amaze:
For whither is he gone, what accident
Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire
After appearance, and again prolong
Our expectation? God of *Israel*,
Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;
Behold the Kings of the Earth how they oppre
Thy chosen, to what highth thir pow'r unjust
They have exalted, and behind them cast
All fear of thee, arise and vindicate
Thy Glory, free thy people from thir yoke,
But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,

Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him,
By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown,
In publick, and with him we have convers'd;
Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
Lay on his Providence; he will not fail
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall,
Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence,
Soon we shall see our hope, our joy return.

Thus they out of their plaints new hope resume
To find whom at the first they found unsought:
But to his Mother *Mary*, when she saw
Others return'd from Baptism, not her Son,
Nor left at *Jordan*, tydings of him none;
Within her breast, though calm; her breast though pure,
Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
Some troubl'd thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad.

O what avails me now that honour high
To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute
Hale highly favour'd, among women blest;

While

While I to sorrows am no less advanc't,
And fears as eminent, above the lot
Of other women, by the birth I bore,
In such a season born when scarce a Shed
Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
From the bleak air; a Stable was our warmth,
A Manger his, yet soon enforc't to flye
Thence into *Egypt*, till the Murd'rous King
Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
With Infant blood the streets of *Bethlehem*;
From *Egypt* home return'd, in *Nazareth*
Hath been our dwelling many years, his life
Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
Little suspicious to any King; but now
Full grown to Man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
By *John* the Baptist, and in publick shown,
Son own'd from Heaven by his Father's voice;
I look't for some great change; to Honour? no,
But trouble, as old *Simeon* plain fore-told,

That to the fall and rising he should be
Of many in *Israel*, and to a sign
Spoken against, that through my very Soul
A sword shall pierce, this is my favour'd lot,
My Exaltation to Afflictions high;
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
I will not argue that, nor will repine.
But where delays he now? some great intent
Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had (seen,
I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
He could not lose himself; but went about
His Father's business; what he meant I mus'd,
Since understand; much more his absence now
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
But I to wait with patience am inur'd;
My heart hath been a store-house long of things
And sayings laid up, portending strange events.
Thus *Mary* pondering oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had pass'd

Since first her Salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling:
The while her Son tracing the Desert wild,
Sole but with holiest Meditations fed,
Into himself descended, and at once
All his great work to come before him set;
How to begin, how to accomplish best
His end of being on Earth, and mission high:
For Satan with sly preface to return
Had left him vacant, and with speed was gon
Up to the middle Region of thick Air,
Where all his Potentates in Council sate;
There without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
Sollicitous and blank he thus began.

Princes, Heavens antient Sons, Æthereal Thro
Demonian Spirits now, from the Element
Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd,
Powers of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth beneath,
So may we hold our place and these mild seats
With

Without new trouble; such an Enemy
Is ris'n to invade us, who no less
Threat'ns our expulsion down to Hell;
I, as I undertook, and with the vote
Consenting in full frequence was impowr'd,
Have found him, view'd him, tasted him, but find
Far other labour to be undergon
Then when I dealt with *Adam* first of Men,
Though *Adam* by his Wives allurement fell,
However to this Man inferior far,
If he be Man by Mothers side at least,
With more then humane gifts from Heaven adorn'd,
Perfections absolute, Graces divine,
And amplitude of mind to greatest Deeds.
Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence
Of my success with *Eve* in Paradise
Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure
Of like succeeding here; I summon all
Rather to be in readiness, with hand

Or counsel to assist; lest I who erst
Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.
So spake the old Serpent doubting, and from all
With clamour was assur'd thir utmost aid
At his command; when from amidst them rose
Belial the dissolutest Spirit that fell,
The sensuallest, and after *Asmodai*
The fleshliest Incubus, and thus advis'd.
Set women in his eye and in his walk,
Among daughters of men the fairest found;
Many are in each Region passing fair
As the noon Skie; more like to Goddesses
Then Mortal Creatures, graceful and discreet,
Expert in amorous Arts, enchanting tongues
Perswasive, Virgin majesty with mild
And sweet allay'd, yet terrible to approach,
Skill'd to retire, and in retiring draw
Hearts after them tangl'd in Amorous Nets.
Such object hath the power to soft'n and tame

Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,
Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
At will the manliest, resolutest breast,
As the Magnetic hardest Iron draws.
Women, when nothing else, beguil'd the heart
Of wisest *Solomon*, and made him build,
And made him bow to the Gods of his Wives.
To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd.
Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st
All others by thy self; because of old
Thou thy self doat'st on womankind, admiring
Thir shape, thir colour, and attractive grace,
None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.
Before the Flood thou with thy lusty Crew,
False titl'd Sons of God, roaming the Earth
Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,
And coupl'd with them, and begot a race.
Have we not seen, or by relation heard,

In Courts and Regal Chambers how thou lurk'ſt,
In Wood or Grove by moſſie Fountain ſide,
In Valley or Green Meadow to way-lay
Some beauty rare, *Caliſto*, *Clymene*,
Daphne, or *Semele*, *Antiopa*,
Or *Amymone*, *Syrinx*, many more
Too long, then lay'ſt thy ſcapes on names ador'd,
Apollo, *Neptune*, *Jupiter*, or *Pan*,
Satyr, or Fawn, or Silvan? But theſe haunts
Delight not all; among the Sons of Men,
How many have with a ſmile made ſmall account
Of beauty and her lures, eaſily ſcorn'd
All her aſſaults, on worthier things intent?
Remember that *Pellean* Conquerour,
A youth, how all the Beauties of the Eaſt
He ſlightly view'd, and ſlightly over-paſs'd;
How hee ſirnam'd of *Africa* diſmiſs'd
In his prime youth the fair *Iberian* maid.
For *Solomon* he liv'd at eaſe, and full

Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
Higher deſign then to enjoy his State;
Thence to the bait of Women lay expos'd;
But he whom we attempt is wiſer far
Then *Solomon*, of more exalted mind,
Made and ſet wholly on the accompliſhment
Of greateſt things; what woman will you find,
Though of this Age the wonder and the fame,
On whom his leiſure will vouchſafe an eye
Of fond deſire? or ſhould ſhe confident,
As ſitting Queen ador'd on Beauties Throne,
Deſcend with all her winning charms begirt
To enamour, as the Zone of *Venus* once
Wrought that effect on *Jove*, ſo Fables tell;
How would one look from his Majeſtick brow
Seated as on the top of Vertues hill,
Diſcount'nance her deſpis'd, and put to rout
All her array; her female pride deject,
Or turn to reverent awe? for Beauty ſtands

In the admiration only of weak minds
Led captive; cease to admire, and all her Plumes
Fall flat and shrink into a trivial toy,
At every sudden slighting quite abasht:
Therefore with manlier objects we must try
His constancy, with such as have more shew
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise;
Rocks whereon greatest men have oftest wreck'd
Or that which only seems to satisfie
Lawful desires of Nature, not beyond;
And now I know he hungers where no food
Is to be found, in the wide Wilderness;
The rest commit to me, I shall let pass
No advantage, and his strength as oft assay.

He ceas'd, and heard thir grant in loud acclaim;
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
Of Spirits likest to himself in guile
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
If cause were to unfold some active Scene

Of various persons each to know his part;
Then to the Desert takes with these his flight;
Where still from shade to shade the Son of God
After forty days fasting had remain'd,
Now hungring first, and to himself thus said.

Where will this end? four times ten days I have (pass'd
Wandring this woody maze, and humane food
Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that Fast
To Vertue I impute not, or count part
Of what I suffer here; if Nature need not,
Or God support Nature without repast
Though needing, what praise is it to endure?
But now I feel I hunger, which declares,
Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God
Can satisfie that need some other way,
Though hunger still remain: so it remain
Without this bodies wasting, I content me,
And from the sting of Famine fear no harm,
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts that feed

Me

Mee hungring more to do my Fathers will,
It was the hour of night, when thus the Son
Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down
Under the hospitable covert nigh
Of Trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, Natures refreshment swe
Him thought, he by the Brook of *Cherith* stood
And saw the Ravens with their horny beaks
Food to *Elijah* bringing Even and Morn,
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what (bro
He saw the Prophet also how he fled
Into the Desert, and how there he slept
Under a Juniper; then how awakt,
He found his Supper on the coals prepar'd,
And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,
And eat the second time after repose,
The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days;
Sometimes that with *Elijah* he partook,

Or as a guest with *Daniel* at his pulse.
Thus wore out night, and now the Herald Lark
Left his ground-nest, high towring to descry
The morns approach, and greet her with his Song:
As lightly from his grassy Couch up rose
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream,
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting wak'd.
Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd,
From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
If Cottage were in view, Sheep-cote or Herd;
But Cottage, Herd or Sheep-cote none he saw,
Only in a bottom saw a pleasant Grove,
With chaunt of tuneful Birds resounding loud;
Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
To rest at noon, and entr'd soon the shade
High roofst and walks beneath, and alleys brown
That open'd in the midst a woody Scene,
Natures own work it seem'd (Nature taught Art)
And to a Superstitious eye the haunt

Of Wood-Gods and Wood-Nymphs; he vie
When suddenly a man before him stood,
Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
As one in City, or Court, or Palace bred,
And with fair speech these words to him addr
With granted leave officious I return,
But much more wonder that the Son of God
In this wild solitude so long should bide
Of all things destitute, and well I know,
Not without hunger. Others of some note,
As story tells, have trod this Wilderness;
The Fugitive Bond-woman with her Son
Out cast *Nebaioth*, yet found he relief
By a providing Angel; all the race
Of *Israel* here had famish'd, had not God
Rain'd from Heaven Manna, and that Prophet
Native of *Thebes* wandring here was fed
Twice by a voice inviting him to eat.
Of thee these forty days none hath regard,

(Forty and more deserted here indeed.
To whom thus Jesus; what conclud'st thou hence?
They all had need, I as thou seest have none.
How hast thou hunger then? Satan reply'd,
Tell me if Food were now before thee set,
Would'st thou not eat? Thereafter as I like
The giver, answer'd Jesus. Why should that
Cause thy refusal, said the subtle Fiend,
Hast thou not right to all Created things,
Owe not all Creatures by just right to thee
Duty and Service, nor to stay till bid,
But tender all their power? nor mention I
Meats by the Law unclean, or offer'd first
To Idols, those young *Daniel* could refuse;
Nor proffer'd by an Enemy, though who
Would scruple that, with want oppreſt? behold
Nature asham'd, or better to express,
Troubl'd that thou shouldst hunger, hath purvey'd
From all the Elements her choicest store

To

To treat thee as beſeems, and as her Lord
With honour, only deign to ſit and eat.
He ſpake no dream, for as his words had end,
Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld
In ample ſpace under the broadeſt ſhade
A Table richly ſpred, in regal mode,
With diſhes pill'd, and meats of nobleſt ſort
And ſavour, Beaſts of chaſe, or Fowl of game,
In paſtry built, or from the ſpit, or boyl'd,
Gris-amber-ſteam'd; all Fiſh from Sea or Shore,
Freſhet, or purling Brook, of ſhell or fin,
And exquiſiteſt name, for which was drain'd
Pontus and *Lucrine* Bay, and *Afric* Coaſt.
Alas how ſimple, to theſe Cates compar'd,
Was that crude Apple that diverted *Eve*!
And at a ſtately ſide-board by the wine
That fragrant ſmell diffus'd, in order ſtood
Tall ſtripling youths rich clad, of fairer hew
Then *Ganymed* or *Hylas*, diſtant more

Under the Trees now trip'd, now ſolemn ſtood
Nymphs of *Diana*'s train, and *Naiades*
With fruits and flowers from *Amalthea*'s horn,
And Ladies of th' *Heſperides*, that ſeem'd
Fairer then feign'd of old, or fabl'd ſince
Of Fairy Damſels met in Foreſt wide
By Knights of *Logres*, or of *Lyones*,
Lancelot or *Pelleas*, or *Pellenore*,
And all the while Harmonious Airs were heard
Of chiming ſtrings, or charming pipes and winds
Of gentleſt gale *Arabian* odors fann'd
From their ſoft wings, and *Flora*'s earlieſt ſmells.
Such was the Splendour, and the Tempter now
His invitation earneſtly renew'd.
What doubts the Son of God to ſit and eat?
These are not Fruits forbidden, no interdict
Defends the touching of theſe viands pure,
Their taſte no knowledge, works at leaſt of evil,
But life preſerves, deſtroys life's enemy,
Hunger

Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
All these are Spirits of Air, and Woods, and Spr
Thy gentle Ministers, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee thir Lor
What doubt'st thou Son of God? sit down and e
To whom thus Jesus temperately reply'd:
Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
And who withholds my pow'r that right to use
Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
When and where likes me best, I can command
I can at will, doubt not, assoon as thou,
Command a Table in this Wilderness,
And call swift flights of Angels ministrant
Array'd in Glory on my cup to attend:
Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence,
In vain, where no acceptance it can find,
And with my hunger what hast thou to do?
Thy pompous Delicacies I contemn,
And count thy specious gifts no gifts but guiles.

To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent:
That I have also power to give thou seest,
If of that pow'r I bring thee voluntary
What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd,
And rather opportunely in this place
Chose to impart to thy apparent need,
Why shouldst thou not accept it? but I see
What I can do or offer is suspect;
Of these things others quickly will dispose
Whose pains have earn'd the far fet spoil. With that
Both Table and Provision vanish'd quite
With sound of Harpies wings, and Talons heard;
Only the importune Tempter still remain'd,
And with these words his temptation pursu'd.
By hunger, that each other Creature tames,
Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd;
Thy temperance invincible besides,
For no allurement yields to appetite;
And all thy heart is set on high designs,

High actions; but wherewith to be atchiev'd?
Great acts require great means of enterprise,
Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
A Carpenter thy Father known, thy self
Bred up in poverty and streights at home;
Lost in a Desert here and hunger-bit:
Which way or from what hope dost thou aspire
To greatness? whence Authority deriv'st,
What Followers, what Retinue canst thou gain,
Or at thy heels the dizzy Multitude,
Longer then thou canst feed them on thy cost?
Money brings Honour, Friends, Conquest, and (Real
What rais'd *Antipater* the *Edomite*,
And his Son *Herod* plac'd on *Juda's* Throne;
(Thy throne) but gold that got him puissant frien
Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
Get Riches first, get Wealth, and Treasure heap
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me,
Riches are mine, Fortune is in my hand;

They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,
While Virtue, Valour, Wisdom sit in want.
To whom thus Jesus patiently reply'd;
Yet Wealth without these three is impotent,
To gain dominion or to keep it gain'd.
Witness those antient Empires of the Earth,
In highth of all thir flowing wealth dissolv'd:
But men endu'd with these have oft attain'd
In lowest poverty to highest deeds;
Gideon and *Jephtha*, and the Shepherd lad,
Whose off-spring on the Throne of *Juda* sat
So many Ages, and shall yet regain
That seat, and reign in *Israel* without end.
Among the Heathen, (for throughout the World
To me is not unknown what hath been done
Worthy of Memorial) canst thou not remember
Quintius, *Fabricius*, *Curius*, *Regulus*?
For I esteem those names of men so poor
Who could do mighty things, and could contemn

Riches though offer'd from the hand of Kings.
And what in me seems wanting, but that I
May also in this poverty as soon
Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?
Extol not Riches then, the toyl of Fools,
The wise mans cumbrance if not snare, more apt
To slacken Virtue, and abate her edge,
Then prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
What if with like aversion I reject
Riches and Realms; yet not for that a Crown,
Golden in shew, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights
To him who wears the Regal Diadem,
When on his shoulders each mans burden lies;
For therein stands the office of a King,
His Honour, Vertue, Merit and chief Praise,
That for the Publick all this weight he bears.
Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, Desires, and Fears, is more a King;
Whi

Which every wise and vertuous man attains:
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or head-strong Multitudes,
Subject himself to Anarchy within,
Or lawless passions in him which he serves.
But to guide Nations in the way of truth
By saving Doctrine, and from errour lead
To know, and knowing worship God aright,
Is yet more Kingly, this attracts the Soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part,
That other o're the body only reigns,
And oft by force, which to a generous mind
So reigning can be no sincere delight.
Besides to give a Kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous, then to assume.
Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a Scepter, oftest better miss't.

The End of the Second Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D

The Third BOOK.

SO ſpake the Son of God, and Satan ſtood
A while as mute confounded what to ſay,
What to reply, confuted and convinc't
Of his weak arguing, and fallacious drift;
At length collecting all his Serpent wiles,
With ſoothing words renew'd, him thus accoſts.
I ſee thou know'ſt what is of uſe to know,
What beſt to ſay canſt ſay, to do canſt do;
Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart
Conteins of good, wiſe, juſt, the perfect ſhape.

Should Kings and Nations from thy mouth conſult,
Thy Counſel would be as the Oracle
Urim and *Thummim*, thoſe oraculous gems
On *Aaron*'s breaſt: or tongue of Seers old
Infallible; or wert thou ſought to deeds
That might require th' array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be ſuch, that all the world
Could not ſuſtain thy Proweſs, or ſubſiſt
In battel, though againſt thy few in arms.
Theſe God-like Vertues wherefore doſt thou hide?
Affecting private life, or more obſcure
In ſavage Wilderneſs, wherefore deprive
All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thy ſelf
The fame and glory, glory the reward
That ſole excites to high attempts the flame
Of moſt erected Spirits, moſt temper'd pure
Ætherial, who all pleaſures elſe deſpiſe,
All treaſures and all gain eſteem as droſs,
And dignities and powers all but the higheſt?

Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe, the Son
Of *Macedonian Philip* had e're these
Won *Asia* and the Throne of *Cyrus* held
At his dispose, young *Scipio* had brought down
The *Carthaginian* pride, young *Pompey* quell'd
The *Pontic* King and in triumph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
Great *Julius*, whom now all the world admires
The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd
With glory, wept that he had liv'd so long
Inglorious: but thou yet art not too late.
To whom our Saviour calmly thus reply'd.
Thou neither dost perswade me to seek wealth
For Empires sake, nor Empire to affect
For glories sake by all thy argument.
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The peoples praise, if always praise unmixt?
And what the people but a herd confus'd,

A miscellaneous rabble, who extol [praise,
Things vulgar, & well weigh'd, scarce worth the
They praise and they admire they know not what;
And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
And what delight to be by such extoll'd,
To live upon thir tongues and be thir talk,
Of whom to be disprais'd were no small praise?
His lot who dares be singularly good.
Th' intelligent among them and the wise
Are few, and glory scarce of few is rais'd,
This is true glory and renown, when God
Looking on the Earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through Heaven
To all his Angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises; thus he did to *Job*,
When to extend his fame through Heaven & Earth,
As thou to thy reproach mayst well remember,
He ask'd thee, hast thou seen my servant *Job*?
Famous he was in Heaven, on Earth less known;

Where

Where glory is false glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy of fam
They err who count it glorious to subdue
By Conquest far and wide, to over-run
Large Countries, and in field great Battels win
Great Cities by assault: what do these Worth
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
Peaceable Nations, neighbouring, or remote,
Made Captive, yet deserving freedom more
Then those thir Conquerours, who leave behin
Nothing but ruin wheresoe're they rove,
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy
Then swell with pride, and must be titl'd God,
Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
Worship't with Temple, Priest and Sacrifice;
One is the Son of *Jove*, of *Mars* the other,
Till Conquerour Death discover them scarcer
Rowling in brutish vices, and deform'd,
Violent or shameful death thir due reward.

But if there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attain'd
Without ambition, war, or violence;
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance; I mention still
Him whom thy wrongs with Saintly patience born,
Made famous in a Land and times obscure;
Who names not now with honour patient *Job?*
Poor *Socrates* (who next more memorable?)
By what he taught and suffer'd for so doing,
For truths sake suffering death unjust, lives now
Equal in fame to proudest Conquerours.
Yet if for fame and glory aught be done,
Aught suffer'd; if young *African* for fame
His wasted Country freed from *Punic* rage,
The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,
And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek
Oft not deserv'd? I seek not mine, but his

Who

Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I
To whom the Tempter murmuring thus rep
Think not so slight of glory; therein least
Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory,
And for his glory all things made, all things
Orders and governs, nor content in Heaven
By all his Angels glorifi'd, requires
Glory from men, from all men good or bad,
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption;
Above all Sacrifice, or hallow'd gift
Glory he requires, and glory he receives
Promiscuous from all Nations, Jew, or Greek,
Or Barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd;
From us his foes pronounc't glory he exacts.
To whom our Saviour fervently reply'd.
And reason; since his word all things produc'd,
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
But to shew forth his goodness, and impart
His good communicable to every soul
Fr

Freely; of whom what could he less expect
Then glory and benediction, that is thanks,
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompence
From them who could return him nothing else,
And not returning that would likeliest render
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?
Hard recompence, unsutable return
For so much good, so much beneficence.
But why should man seek glory? who of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?
Who for so many benefits receiv'd
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoil'd,
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take
That which to God alone of right belongs;
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory, not thir own,
Them he himself to glory will advance.
So

So spake the Son of God; and here again
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
With guilt of his own sin, for he himself
Insatiable of glory had lost all,
Yet of another Plea bethought him soon.
Of glory as thou wilt, said he, so deem,
Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass:
But to a Kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
To sit upon thy Father *David*'s Throne;
By Mothers side thy Father, though thy right
Be now in powerful hands, that will not part
Easily from possession won with arms;
Judæa now and all the promis'd land
Reduc't a Province under Roman yoke,
Obeys *Tiberius*; nor is always rul'd
With temperate sway; oft have they violated
The Temple, oft the Law with foul affronts,
Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus: and think'st thou to regain

Thy right by sitting still or thus retiring?
So did not *Machabeus*: he indeed
Retir'd unto the Desert, but with arms;
And o're a mighty King so oft prevail'd,
That by strong hand his Family obtain'd,
Though Priests, the Crown, and *David*'s Throne (usurp'd,
With *Modin* and her Suburbs once content.
If Kingdom move thee not, let move thee Zeal,
And Duty; Zeal and Duty are not slow;
But on Occasions forelock watchful wait.
They themselves rather are occasion best,
Zeal of thy Fathers house, Duty to free
Thy Country from her Heathen servitude;
So shalt thou best fullfil, best verifie
The Prophets old, who sung thy endless raign,
The happier raign the sooner it begins,
Raign then; what canst thou better do the while?
To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd.
All things are best fullfil'd in their due time,

And

And time there is for all things, Truth hath said:
If of my raign Prophetic Writ hath told,
That it shall never end, so when begin
The Father in his purpose hath decreed,
He in whose hand all times and seasons roul:
What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be try'd in humble state, and things adverse,
By tribulations, injuries, insults,
Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting
Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
What I can suffer, how obey? who best
Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first
Well hath obey'd; just tryal e're I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee when I begin
My everlasting Kingdom, why art thou
Sollicitous, what moves thy inquisition?
Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,

And my promotion will be thy destruction?
To whom the Tempter inly rackt reply'd.
Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
Of my reception into grace; what worse?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear;
If there be worse, the expectation more
Of worse torments me then the feeling can.
I would be at the worst; worst is my Port,
My harbour and my ultimate repose,
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime; whatever for it self condemn'd,
And will alike be punish'd; whether thou
Raign or raign not; though to that gentle brow
Willingly I could flye, and hope thy raign,
From that placid aspect and meek regard,
Rather then aggravate my evil state,
Would stand between me and thy Fathers ire;
(Whose ire I dread more then the fire of Hell)

A shelter and a kind of shading cool
Interposition, as a summers cloud.
If I then to the worst that can be hast,
Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
Happiest both to thy self and all the world,
That thou who worthiest art should'st be thir K
Perhaps thou linger'st in deep thoughts detain'd
Of the enterprize so hazardous and high;
No wonder, for though in thee be united
What of perfection can in man be found,
Or human nature can receive, consider
Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
At home, scarce view'd the *Gallilean* Towns,
And once a year *Jerusalem*, few days
Short sojourn; and what thence could'st thou ob
The world thou hast not seen, much less her
Empires, and Monarchs, and thir radiant Cou
Best school of best experience, quickest in sig
In all things that to greatest actions lead.

The wisest, unexperienc't, will be ever
Timorous and loth, with novice modesty,
(As he who seeking Asses found a Kingdom)
Irresolute, unhardy, unadventrous:
But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes
The Monarchies of the Earth, thir pomp and state,
Sufficient introduction to inform
Thee, of thy self so apt, in regal Arts,
And regal Mysteries; that thou may'st know
How best their opposition to withstand.
With that (such power was giv'n him then) he (took
The Son of God up to a Mountain high.
It was a Mountain at whose verdant feet
A spatious plain out stretch't in circuit wide
Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flow'd,
Th' one winding, the other strait and left between
Fair Champain with less rivers interveind,
Then meeting joyn'd thir tribute to the Sea:

Fertil of corn the glebe, of oyl and wine,
With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks th
Huge Cities and high towr'd, that well might
The seats of mightiest Monarchs, and so large
The Prospect was, that here and there was roo
For barren desert fountainless and dry.
To this high mountain top the Tempter brough
Our Saviour, and new train of words began.
Well have we speeded, and o're hill and dale
Forest and field, and flood, Temples and Towe
Cut shorter many a league; here thou beholdi
Assyria and her Empires antient bounds,
Araxes and the *Caspian* lake, thence on
As far as *Indus* East, *Euphrates* West,
And oft beyond; to South the *Persian* Bay,
And inaccessible the *Arabian* drouth:
Here *Ninevee*, of length within her wall
Several days journey, built by *Ninus* old,
Of that first golden Monarchy the seat,

And seat of *Salmanassar*, whose success
Israel in long captivity still mourns;
There *Babylon* the wonder of all tongues,
As antient, but rebuilt by him who twice
Judah and all thy Father *David*'s house
Led captive, and *Jerusalem* laid waste,
Till *Cyrus* set them free; *Persepolis*
His City there thou seest, and *Bactra* there;
Ecbatana her structure vast there shews,
And *Hecatompylos* her hunderd gates,
There *Susa* by *Choaspes*, amber stream,
The drink of none but Kings; of later fame
Built by *Emathian*, or by *Parthian* hands,
The great *Seleucia*, *Nisibis*, and there
Artaxata, *Teredon*, *Tesiphon*,
Turning with easie eye thou may'st behold.
All these the *Parthian*, now some Ages past,
By great *Arsaces* led, who founded first
That Empire, under his dominion holds

From the luxurious Kings of *Antioch* won.
And just in time thou com'st to have a view
Of his great power; for now the *Parthian* King
In *Ctesiphon* hath gather'd all his Host
Against the *Scythian*, whose incursions wild
Have wasted *Sogdiana*; to her aid
He marches now in haste; see, though from far,
His thousands, in what martial equipage
They issue forth, Steel Bows, and Shafts their ar
Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;
All Horsemen, in which fight they most excel;
See how in warlike muster they appear,
In Rhombs and wedges, and half moons, and wi
He look't and saw what numbers numberless
The City gates out powr'd, light armed Troo
In coats of Mail and military pride;
In Mail thir horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
Prauncing their riders bore, the flower and cho
Of many Provinces from bound to bound;

From *Arachosia*, from *Candaor* East,
And *Margiana* to the *Hyrcanian* cliffs
Of *Caucasus*, and dark *Iberian* dales,
From *Atropatia* and the neighbouring plains
Of *Adiabene*, *Media*, and the South
Of *Susiana* to *Balsara*'s hav'n.
He saw them in thir forms of battell rang'd,
How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowie shower against the face
Of thir pursuers, and overcame by flight;
The field all iron cast a gleaming brown,
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn,
Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight;
Chariots or Elephants endorst with Towers
Of Archers, nor of labouring Pioners
A multitude with Spades and Axes arm'd
To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
Or where plain was raise hill, or over-lay
With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;

Mules after these, Camels and Dromedaries,
And Waggons fraught with Utensils of war.
Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When *Agrican* with all his Northern powers
Besieg'd *Albracca*, as Romances tell;
The City of *Gallaphrone*, from thence to win
The fairest of her Sex *Angelica*
His daughter, sought by many Prowest Knights,
Both *Paynim*, and the Peers of *Charlemane*.
Such and so numerous was thir Chivalrie;
At sight whereof the Fiend yet more presum'd,
And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd.

That thou may'st know I seek not to engage
Thy Vertue, and not every way secure
On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark
To what end I have brought thee hither and shew
All this fair sight; thy Kingdom though foretold
By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou
Endeavour, as thy Father *David* did,

Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
In all things, and all men, supposes means,
Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes. false
But say thou wer't possess'd of *David*'s Throne
By free consent of all, none opposite,
Samaritan or *Jew*; how could'st thou hope
Long to enjoy it quiet and secure,
Between two such enclosing enemies
Roman and *Parthian*? therefore one of these
Thou must make sure thy own, the *Parthian* first
By my advice, as nearer and of late
Found able by invasion to annoy
Thy country, and captive lead away her Kings
Antigonus, and old *Hyrcanus* bound,
Maugre the *Roman*: it shall be my task
To render thee the *Parthian* at dispose;
Chuse which thou wilt by conquest or by league.
By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
That which alone can truly reinstall thee

In *David's* royal seat, his true Successour,
Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten Tribes
Whose off-spring in his Territory yet serve
In *Habor*, and among the *Medes* dispers't,
Ten Sons of *Jacob*, two of *Joseph* lost
Thus long from *Israel*; serving as of old
Thir Fathers in the land of *Egypt* serv'd,
This offer sets before thee to deliver.
These if from servitude thou shalt restore
To thir inheritance, then, nor till then,
Thou on the Throne of *David* in full glory,
From *Egypt* to *Euphrates* and beyond
Shalt raign, and *Rome* or *Cæsar* not need fear.
To whom our Saviour answer'd thus unmov
Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm,
And fragile arms, much instrument of war
Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear
Vented much policy, and projects deep

Of enemies, of aids, battels and leagues,
Plausible to the world, to me worth naught.
Means I must use thou say'st, prediction else
Will unpredict and fail me of the Throne:
My time I told thee, (and that time for thee
Were better farthest off) is not yet come;
When that comes think not thou to find me slack
On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome
Luggage of war there shewn me, argument
Of human weakness rather then of strength.
My brethren, as thou call'st them; those Ten Tribes
I must deliver, if I mean to raign
David's true heir, and his full Scepter sway
To just extent over all *Israel's* Sons;
But whence to thee this zeal, where was it then
For *Israel*, or for *David*, or his Throne,
When thou stood'st up his Tempter to the pride
Of numbring *Israel*, which cost the lives

Of

Of threescore and ten thousand *Israelites*
By three days Pestilence? such was thy zeal
To *Israel* then, the same that now to me.
As for those captive Tribes, themselves were they
Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
From God to worship Calves, the Deities
Of *Egypt*, *Baal* next and *Ashtaroth*,
And all the Idolatries of Heathen round,
Besides thir other worse then heathenish crimes;
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
The God of their fore-fathers; but so dy'd
Impenitent, and left a race behind
Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
From Gentils, but by Circumcision vain,
And God with Idols in their worship joyn'd.
Should I of these the liberty regard,
Who freed, as to their antient Patrimony,
Unhumbl'd, unrepentant, unreform'd,

Headlong would follow; and to thir Gods perhaps
Of *Bethel* and of *Dan*? no, let them serve
Thir enemies, who serve Idols with God.
Yet he at length, time to himself best known,
Remembring *Abraham* by some wond'rous call
May bring them back repentant and sincere,
And at their passing cleave the *Assyrian* flood,
While to their native land with joy they hast,
As the Red Sea and *Jordan* once he cleft,
When to the promis'd land thir Fathers pass'd;
To his due time and providence I leave them.
So spake *Israel*'s true King, and to the Fiend
Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
So fares it when with truth falshood contends.

The End of the Third Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D

The Fourth BOOK.

PErplex'd and troubl'd at his bad ſucceſs
The Tempter ſtood, nor had what to rep
Diſcover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope,
So oft, and the perſwaſive Rhetoric
That ſleek't his tongue, and won ſo much on *Eve*,
So little here, nay loſt; but *Eve* was *Eve*,
This far his over-match, who ſelf deceiv'd
And raſh, before-hand had no better weigh'd
The ſtrength he was to cope with, or his own:
But as a man who had been matchleſs held
In cunning, over-reach't where leaſt he thought,

To ſalve his credit, and for very ſpight
Still will be tempting him who foyls him ſtill,
And never ceaſe, though to his ſhame the more;
Or as a ſwarm of flies in vintage time,
About the wine-preſs where ſweet mouſt is powr'd,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming ſound;
Or ſurging waves againſt a ſolid rock,
Though all to ſhivers daſh't, the aſſault renew,
Vain battry, and in froth or bubbles end;
So Satan, whom repulſe upon repulſe
Met ever; and to ſhameful ſilence brought,
Yet gives not o're though deſperate of ſucceſs,
And his vain importunity purſues.
He brought our Saviour to the weſtern ſide
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long but in bredth not wide;
Waſh'd by the Southern Sea, and on the North
To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills
That ſcreen'd the fruits of the earth and ſeats of men

From

From cold *Septentrion* blasts, thence in the midst
Divided by a river, of whose banks
On each side an Imperial City stood,
With Towers and Temples proudly elevate
On seven small Hills, with Palaces adorn'd,
Porches and Theatres, Baths, Aqueducts,
Statues and Trophees, and Triumphal Arcs,
Gardens and Groves presented to his eyes,
Above the highth of Mountains interpos'd.
By what strange Parallax or Optic skill
Of vision multiplyed through air, or glass
Of Telescope, were curious to enquire:
And now the Tempter thus his silence broke.
The City which thou seest no other deem
Then great and glorious *Rome*, Queen of the Ea
So far renown'd, and with the spoils enricht
Of Nations; there the Capitol thou seest
Above the rest lifting his stately head
On the *Tarpeian* rock, her Cittadel

Impregnable, and there Mount *Palatine*
The Imperial Palace, compass huge, and high
The Structure, skill of noblest Architects,
With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,
Turrets and Terrases, and glittering Spires.
Many a fair Edifice besides, more like
Houses of Gods (so well I have dispos'd
My Aerie Microscope) thou may'st behold
Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs
Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd Artificers
In Cedar, Marble, Ivory or Gold.
Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
What conflux issuing forth, or entring in,
Pretors, Proconsuls to thir Provinces
Hasting or on return, in robes of State;
Lictors and rods the ensigns of thir power,
Legions and Cohorts, turmes of horse and wings:
Or Embassies from Regions far remote
In various habits on the *Appian* road,

Or on the *Æmilian*, some from farthest South,
70 *Syene*, and where the shadow both way falls,
Meroe Nilotic Isle, and more to West,
The Realm of *Bocchus* to the Black-moor Sea;
From the *Asian* Kings and *Parthian* among these,
From *India* and the golden *Chersones*,
And utmost *Indian* Isle *Taprobane*,
Dusk faces with white silken Turbants wreath'd:
From *Gallia*, *Gades*, and the *Brittish* West,
Germans and *Scythians*, and *Sarmatians* North
Beyond *Danubius* to the *Tauric* Pool.
80 All Nations now to *Rome* obedience pay,
To *Rome's* great Emperour, whose wide domain
In ample Territory, wealth and power,
Civility of Manners, Arts, and Arms,
And long Renown thou justly may'st prefer
Before the *Parthian*; these two Thrones except,
The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
Shar'd among petty Kings too far remov'd;

These having shewn thee, I have shewn thee all
The Kingdoms of the world, and all thir glory.
90 This Emperour hath no Son, and now is old,
Old, and lascivious, and from *Rome* retir'd
To *Capreæ* an Island small but strong
On the *Campanian* shore, with purpose there
His horrid lusts in private to enjoy,
Committing to a wicked Favourite
All publick cares, and yet of him suspicious,
Hated of all, and hating; with what ease
Indu'd with Regal Vertues as thou art,
Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
100 Might'st thou expel this monster from his Throne
Now made a stye, and in his place ascending
A victor, people free from servile yoke?
And with my help thou may'st; to me the power
Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
Aim therefore at no less then all the world,
Aim at the highest, without the highest attain'd

Will be for thee no sitting, or not long
On *David's* Throne, be propheci'd what will.
To whom the Son of God unmov'd reply'd.
Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show
Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
More then of arms before, allure mine eye,
Much less my mind; though thou should'st add to tell
Thir sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
On *Cittron* tables or *Atlantic* stone;
(For I have also heard, perhaps have read)
Their wines of *Setia*, *Cales*, and *Falerne*,
Chios and *Creet*, and how they quaff in Gold,
Crystal and Myrrhine cups imboss'd with Gems
And studs of Pearl, to me should'st tell who thirst
And hunger still: then Embassies thou shew'st
From Nations far and nigh; what honour that,
But tedious wast of time to sit and hear
So many hollow complements and lies,
Outlandish flatteries? then proceed'st to talk

Of the Emperour, how easily subdu'd,
How gloriously; I shall, thou say'st, expel
A brutish monster: what if I withal
Expel a Devil who first made him such?
Let his tormenter Conscience find him out,
For him I was not sent, nor yet to free
That people victor once, now vile and base,
Deservedly made vassal, who once just,
Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquer'd well,
But govern ill the Nations under yoke,
Peeling thir Provinces, exhausted all
By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown
Of triumph that insulting vanity;
Then cruel, by thir sports to blood enur'd
Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts expos'd,
Luxurious by thir wealth, and greedier still,
And from the daily Scene effeminate.
What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These thus degenerate, by themselves enslav'd,

Or could of inward slaves make outward free?
Know therefore when my season comes to sit
On *David's* Throne, it shall be like a tree
Spreading and over-shadowing all the Earth,
Or as a stone that shall to pieces dash
All Monarchies besides throughout the world,
And of my Kingdom there shall be no end:
Means there shall be to this, but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.

To whom the Tempter impudent repli'd.
I see all offers made by me how slight
Thou valu'st, because offer'd, and reject'st:
Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more then still to contradict:
On the other side know also thou, that I
On what I offer set as high esteem,
Nor what I part with mean to give for naught;
All these which in a moment thou behold'st,
The Kingdoms of the world to thee I give;

For giv'n to me, I give to whom I please,
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superior Lord,
Easily done, and hold them all of me;
For what can less so great a gift deserve?
Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain.
I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less,
Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
The abominable terms, impious condition;
But I endure the time, till which expir'd,
Thou hast permission on me. It is written
The first of all Commandments, Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee accurst, now more accurst
For this attempt bolder then that on *Eve*,
And more blasphemous? which expect to rue.
The Kingdoms of the world to thee were giv'n,

Permitted rather, and by thee usurp't,
Other donation none thou canst produce?
If given, by whom but by the King of Kings,
God over all supreme? if giv'n to thee,
By thee how fairly is the Giver now
Repaid? But gratitude in thee is lost
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
190 As offer them to me the Son of God,
To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
That I fall down and worship thee as God?
Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st
That Evil one, Satan for ever damn'd.

To whom the Fiend with fear abasht reply'd,
Be not so sore offended, Son of God;
Though Sons of God both Angels are and Men,
If I to try whether in higher sort
Then these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd
200 What both from Men and Angels I receive,
Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth

Nations besides from all the quarter'd winds,
God of this world invok't and world beneath;
Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
To me so fatal, me it most concerns.
The tryal hath indamag'd thee no way,
Rather more honour left and more esteem;
Me naught advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.
Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
The Kingdoms of this world; I shall no more
Advise thee, gain them as thou canst, or not.
210 And thou thy self seem'st otherwise inclin'd
Then to a worldly Crown, addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute,
As by that early action may be judg'd,
When slipping from thy Mothers eye thou went'st
Alone into the Temple; there was found
Among the gravest Rabbies disputant
On points and questions fitting *Moses* Chair,
Teaching not taught; the childhood shews the man,

As morning shews the day. Be famous then
By wisdom; as thy Empire must extend,
So let extend thy mind o're all the world,
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend,
All knowledge is not couch't in *Moses* Law,
The *Pentateuch* or what the Prophets wrote,
The *Gentiles* also know, and write, and teach
To admiration, led by Natures light;
And with the *Gentiles* much thou must converse,
Ruling them by persuasion as thou mean'st,
Without thir learning how wilt thou with them,
Or they with thee hold conversation meet?
How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
Thir Idolisms, Traditions, Paradoxes?
Error by his own arms is best evinc't.
Look once more e're we leave this specular Mou
Westward, much nearer by Southwest, behold
Where on the *Ægean* shore a City stands
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil,

Athens the eye of *Greece*, Mother of Arts
And Eloquence, native to famous wits
Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
City or Suburban, studious walks and shades;
See there the Olive Grove of *Academe*,
Plato's retirement, where the *Attic* Bird
Trills her thick-warbl'd notes the summer long,
There flowrie hill *Hymettus* with the sound
Of Bees industrious murmur oft invites
To studious musing; there *Ilissus* rouls
His whispering stream; within the walls then view
The schools of antient Sages; his who bred
Great *Alexander* to subdue the world,
Lyceum there, and painted *Stoa* next:
There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power
Of harmony in tones and numbers hit
By voice or hand, and various-measur'd verse,
Æolian charms and *Dorian Lyric* Odes,
And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,

Blind *Melesigenes* thence *Homer* call'd,
Whose Poem *Phœbus* challeng'd for his own.
Thence what the lofty grave Tragœdians taught
In *Chorus* or *Iambic*, teachers best
Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd
In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
Of fate, and chance, and change in human life;
High actions, and high passions best describing:
Thence to the famous Orators repair,
Those antient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce Democratie,
Shook the Arsenal and fulmin'd over *Greece*,
To *Macedon*, and *Artaxerxes* Throne;
To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,
From Heaven descended to the low-roofst house
Of *Socrates*, see there his Tenement,
Whom well inspir'd the Oracle pronounc'd
Wisest of men; from whose mouth issu'd forth
Mellifluous streams that water'd all the schools

Of Academics old and new, with those
Sirnam'd *Peripatetics*, and the Sect
Epicurean, and the *Stoic* severe;
These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,
Till time mature thee to a Kingdom's waight;
These rules will render thee a King compleat
Within thy self, much more with Empire joyn'd.
To whom our Saviour sagely thus repli'd.
Think not but that I know these things, or think
I know them not; not therefore am I short
Of knowing what I aught: he who receives
Light from above, from the fountain of light,
No other doctrine needs, though granted true;
But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
The first and wisest of them all profess'd
To know this only, that he nothing knew;
The next to fabling fell and smooth conceits,
A third sort doubted all things, though plain sence;

Others

Others in vertue plac'd felicity,
But vertue joyn'd with riches and long life,
In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease,
The Stoic last in Philosophic pride,
By him call'd vertue; and his vertuous man,
Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
As fearing God nor man, contemning all
Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life,
Which when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
Alas what can they teach, and not mislead;
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
Much of the Soul they talk, but all awrie,
And in themselves seek vertue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none,

Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not, or by delusion
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,
An empty cloud. However many books
Wise men have said are wearisom; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
(And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek)
Uncertain and unsettl'd still remains,
Deep verst in books and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
And trifles for choice matters, worth a spunge;
As Children gathering pibles on the shore.
Or if I would delight my private hours
With Music or with Poem, where so soon
As in our native Language can I find
That solace? All our Law and Story strew'd

With Hymns, our Psalms with artful terms inscrib'd
Our Hebrew Songs and Harps in *Babylon*,
That pleas'd so well our Victors ear, declare
That rather *Greece* from us these Arts deriv'd;
Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
The vices of thir Deities, and thir own
In Fable, Hymn, or Song, so personating
Thir Gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
Remove their swelling Epithetes thick laid
As varnish on a Harlots cheek, the rest,
Thin sown with aught of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With *Sion's* songs, to all true tasts excelling,
Where God is prais'd aright, and Godlike men,
The Holiest of Holies, and his Saints;
Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee;
Unless where moral vertue is express't
By light of Nature not in all quite lost.
Thir Orators thou then extoll'st, as those

The top of Eloquence, Statists indeed,
And lovers of thir Country, as may seem;
But herein to our Prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of Civil Government
In thir majestic unaffected stile
Than all the Oratory of *Greece* and *Rome*.
In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
What makes a Nation happy, and keeps it so,
What ruins Kingdoms, and lays Cities flat;
These only with our Law best form a King.
So spake the Son of God; but Satan now
Quite at a loss, for all his darts were spent,
Thus to our Saviour with stern brow reply'd.
Since neither wealth, nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor Empire pleases thee, nor aught
By me propos'd in life contemplative,
Or active, tended on by glory, or fame,
What dost thou in this World? the Wilderness

For thee is fittest place, I found thee there,
And thither will return thee, yet remember
What I foretell thee, soon thou shalt have cause
To wish thou never hadst rejected thus
Nicely or cautiously my offer'd aid,
Which would have set thee in short time with ease
On *David's* Throne; or Throne of all the world,
Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season,
When Prophesies of thee are best fullfill'd.
Now contrary, if I read aught in Heaven,
Or Heav'n write aught of Fate, by what the Stars
Voluminous, or single characters,
In their conjunction met, give me to spell,
Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate,
Attends thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death,
A Kingdom they portend thee, but what Kingdom,
Real or Allegoric I discern not,
Nor when, eternal sure, as without end,

With-

Without beginning; for no date prefixt
Directs me in the Starry Rubric set.
So saying he took (for still he knew his power
Not yet expir'd) and to the Wilderness
Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
As day-light sunk, and brought in lowring night
Her shadowy off-spring unsubstantial both,
Privation meer of light and absent day.
Our Saviour meek and with untroubl'd mind
After his aerie jaunt, though hurried sore,
Hungry and cold betook him to his rest,
Wherever, under some concourse of shades
Whose branching arms thick intertwind might shield
From dews and damps of night his shelter'd head,
But shelter'd slept in vain, for at his head
The Tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
Disturb'd his sleep; and either Tropic now
'Gan thunder, and both ends of Heav'n, the Clouds

From

From many a horrid rift abortive pour'd
Fierce rain with lightning mixt, water with fire
410 In ruine reconcil'd: nor slept the winds
Within thir stony caves, but rush'd abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vext Wilderness, whose tallest Pines,
Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest Oaks
Bow'd their Stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,
Or torn up sheer: ill wast thou shrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only stoodst
Unshaken; nor yet staid the terror there,
Infernal Ghosts, and Hellish Furies, round
420 Environ'd thee, some howl'd, some yell'd, some (shriek'd,
Some bent at thee thir fiery darts, while thou
Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace.
Thus pass'd the night so foul till morning fair
Came forth with Pilgrim steps in amice gray;
Who with her radiant finger still'd the roar
Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
And

And grisly Spectres, which the Fiend had rais'd
To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
And now the Sun with more effectual beams
430 Had chear'd the face of Earth, and dry'd the wet
From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds
Who all things now behold more fresh and green,
After a night of storm so ruinous,
Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray
To gratulate the sweet return of morn;
Nor yet amidst this joy and brightest morn
Was absent, after all his mischief done,
The Prince of darkness, glad would also seem
Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came,
440 Yet with no new device, they all were spent,
Rather by this his last affront resolv'd,
Desperate of better course, to vent his rage,
And mad despight to be so oft repell'd,
Him walking on a Sunny hill he found,
Back'd on the North and West by a thick wood,

Out of the wood he ſtarts in wonted ſhape;
And in a careleſs mood thus to him ſaid.
Fair morning yet betides thee Son of God,
After a diſmal night; I heard the rack
As Earth and Skie would mingle; but my ſelf
Was diſtant; and theſe flaws, though mortals fear
As dangerous to the pillard frame of Heaven,
Or to the Earths dark baſis underneath,
Are to the main as inconſiderable,
And harmleſs, if not wholſom, as a ſneeze
To mans leſs univerſe, and ſoon are gone;
Yet as being oft times noxious where they light
On man, beaſt, plant, waſtful and turbulent,
Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,
Over whoſe heads they rore, and ſeem to point,
They oft fore-ſignifie and threaten ill:
This Tempeſt at this Deſert moſt was bent;
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'ſt.
Did I not tell thee, if thou didſt reject

The perfet ſeaſon offer'd with my aid
To win thy deſtin'd ſeat, but wilt prolong
All to the puſh of Fate, perſue thy way
Of gaining *David's* Throne no man knows when,
For both the when and how is no where told,
Thou ſhalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
For Angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
The time and means: each act is rightlieſt done,
Not when it muſt, but when it may be beſt.
If thou obſerve not this, be ſure to find,
What I foretold thee, many a hard aſſay
Of dangers, and adverſities and pains,
E're thou of *Iſrael's* Scepter get faſt hold;
Whereof this ominous night that clos'd thee round,
So many terrors, voices, prodigies
May warn thee, as a ſure fore-going ſign.
So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on
And ſtaid not, but in brief him anſwer'd thus.
Mee worſe then wet thou find'ſt not; other harm

Those terrors which thou speak'st of, did me none
I never fear'd they could, though noising loud
And threatning nigh; what they can do as signs
Betok'ning, or ill boding, I contemn
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
Who knowing I shall raign past thy preventing,
Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I accepting
At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
Ambitious spirit, and wouldst be thought my God
And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrifie
Mee to thy will; desist, thou art discern'd
And toil'st in vain, nor me in vain molest.

To whom the Fiend now swoln with rage reply'd:
Then hear, O Son of *David*, Virgin-born;
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt,
Of the Messiah I have heard foretold
By all the Prophets; of thy birth at length
Announc't by *Gabriel* with the first I knew,
And of the Angelic Song in *Bethlehem* field,

On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.
From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;
Till at the Ford of *Jordan* whither all
Flock'd to the Baptist, I among the rest,
Though not to be Baptiz'd, by voice from Heav'n
Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God belov'd.
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower Scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God, which bears no single sence;
The Son of God I also am, or was,
And if I was, I am; relation stands;
All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought
In some respect far higher so declar'd.
Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,
And follow'd thee still on to this wast wild;
Where by all best conjectures I collect

Thou art to be my fatal enemy.
Good reason then, if I before-hand seek
To understand my Adversary, who
And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent,
By parl, or composition, truce, or league
To win him, or win from him what I can.
And opportunity I here have had
To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
Proof against all temptation as a rock
Of Adamant, and as a Center, firm
To the utmost of meer man both wise and good,
Not more; for Honours, Riches, Kingdoms, Glory
Have been before contemn'd, and may agen:
Therefore to know what more thou art then man,
Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heav'n,
Another method I must now begin.
So saying he caught him up, and without wing
Of *Hippogrif* bore through the Air sublime
Over the Wilderness and o're the Plain;

Till underneath them fair *Jerusalem*,
The holy City lifted high her Towers,
And higher yet the glorious Temple rear'd
Her pile, far off appearing like a Mount
Of Alabaster, top't with Golden Spires:
There on the highest Pinacle he set
The Son of God; and added thus in scorn:
There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
Will ask thee skill; I to thy Fathers house
Have brought thee, and highest plac't, highest is best,
Now shew thy Progeny; if not to stand,
Cast thy self down; safely if Son of God:
For it is written, He will give command
Concerning thee to his Angels, in thir hands
They shall up lift thee, lest at any time
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.
To whom thus Jesus: also it is written,
Tempt not the Lord thy God, he said and stood.
But Satan smitten with amazement fell

As

560 As when Earths Son *Antæus* (to compare
Small things with greatest) in *Irassa* strove
With *Joves Alcides*, and oft foil'd still rose,
Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,
Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple joyn'd,
Throttl'd at length in the Air, expir'd and fell;
So after many a foil the Tempter proud,
Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride
Fell whence he stood to see his Victor fall.
And as that *Theban* Monster that propos'd
570 Her riddle, and him, who solv'd it not, devour'd;
That once found out and solv'd, for grief and spight
Cast her self headlong from th' *Ismenian* steep,
So strook with dread and anguish fell the Fiend,
And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
Joyless triumphals of his hop't success,
Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.
So Satan fell and strait a fiery Globe

Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
580 Who on their plumy Vans receiv'd him soft
From his uneasie station, and upbore
As on a floating couch through the blithe Air,
Then in a flowry valley set him down
On a green bank, and set before him spred
A table of Celestial Food, Divine,
Ambrosial, Fruits fetcht from the tree of life,
And from the fount of life Ambrosial drink,
That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd
What hunger, if aught hunger had impair'd,
590 Or thirst, and as he fed, Angelic Quires
Sung Heavenly Anthems of his victory
Over temptation, and the Tempter proud.
True Image of the Father whether thron'd
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
Conceiving, or remote from Heaven, enshrin'd
In fleshly Tabernacle, and human form,
Wandring the Wilderness, whatever place,

Habit,

Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
The Son of God, with Godlike force indu'd
Against th' Attempter of thy Fathers Throne,
And Thief of Paradise; him long of old
Thou didst debel, and down from Heav'n cast
With all his Army, now thou hast aveng'd
Supplanted *Adam*, and by vanquishing
Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent:
He never more henceforth will dare set foot
In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
For though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
A fairer Paradise is founded now
For *Adam* and his chosen Sons, whom thou
A Saviour art come down to re-install.
Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be
Of Tempter and Temptation without fear.
But thou, Infernal Serpent, shalt not long
Rule in the Clouds; like an Autumnal Star

Or Lightning thou shalt fall from Heav'n trod down
Under his feet: for proof, e're this thou feel'st
Thy wound, yet not thy last and deadliest wound
By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in Hell
No triumph; in all her gates *Abaddon* rues
Thy bold attempt; hereafter learn with awe
To dread the Son of God: he all unarm'd
Shall chase thee with the terror of his voice
From thy Demoniac holds, possession foul,
Thee and thy Legions, yelling they shall flye,
And beg to hide them in a herd of Swine,
Lest he command them down into the deep
Bound, and to torment sent before thir time.
Hail Son of the most High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan, on thy glorious work
Now enter, and begin to save mankind.
Thus they the Son of God our Saviour meek
Sung Victor, and from Heavenly Feast refresht
Brought on his way with joy; hee unobserv'd
Home to his Mothers house private return'd.

The END.

SAMSON AGONISTES,

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

The Author

JOHN MILTON.

Aristot. Poet. Cap. 6.

Τραγῳδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας, &c.

Tragædia est imitatio actionis seriæ, &c. Per misericordiam & metum perficiens talium affectuum lustrationem.

LONDON,

Printed by *J. M.* for *John Starkey* at the *Mitre* in *Fleetstreet*, near *Temple-Bar*.

MDCLXXI.

Of that sort of Dramatic Poem which is call'd Tragedy.

TRagedy, as it was antiently compos'd, hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other Poems: therefore said by *Aristotle* to be of power by raising pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of those and such like passions, that is to temper and reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirr'd up by reading or seeing those passions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his assertion: for so in Physic things of melancholic hue and quality are us'd against melancholy, sowr against sowr, salt to remove salt humours. Hence Philosophers and other gravest Writers, as *Cicero*, *Plutarch* and others, frequently cite out of Tragic Poets, both to adorn and illustrate thir discourse. The Apostle *Paul* himself thought it not unworthy to insert a verse of *Euripides* into the Text of Holy Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 15. 33. and *Parœus* commenting on the *Revelation*, divides the whole Book as a Tragedy, into Acts distinguisht each by a Chorus of Heavenly Harpings and Song between. Hereto-

fore Men in highest dignity have labour'd not a little to be thought able to compose a Tragedy. Of that honour *Dionysius* the elder was no less ambitious, then before of his attaining to the Tyranny. *Augustus Cæsar* also had begun his *Ajax*, but unable to please his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfinisht. *Seneca* the Philosopher is by some thought the Author of those Tragedies (at least the best of them) that go under that name. *Gregory Nazianzen* a Father of the Church, thought it not unbeseeming the sanctity of his person to write a Tragedy, which he entitl'd, *Christ suffering*. This is mention'd to vindicate Tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day with other common Interludes; hap'ning through the Poets error of intermixing Comic stuff with Tragic sadness and gravity; or introducing trivial and vulgar persons, which by all judicious hath bin counted absurd; and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratifie the people. And though antient Tragedy use no Prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self defence, or explanation, that which *Martial* calls an Epistle; in behalf of this Tragedy coming forth after the antient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus much before-hand may be Epistl'd; that *Chorus* is here introduc'd after the Greek manner, not antient only but modern, and still in use among the *Italians*. In the modelling therefore of this Poem, with good reason, the Antients and *Italians* are rather follow'd, as of much more

more authority and fame. The measure of Verse us'd in the Chorus is of all sorts, call'd by the Greeks *Monostrophic*, or rather *Apolelymenon*, without regard had to *Strophe*, *Antistrophe* or *Epod*, which were a kind of Stanza's fram'd only for the Music, then us'd with the Chorus that sung; not essential to the Poem, and therefore not material; or being divided into Stanza's or Pauses, they may be call'd *Allæostropha*. Division into Act and Scene referring chiefly to the Stage (to which this work never was intended) is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole Drama be found not produc't beyond the fift Act, of the style and uniformitie, and that commonly call'd the Plot, whether intricate or explicit, which is nothing indeed but such œconomy, or disposition of the fable as may stand best with verisimilitude and decorum; they only will best judge who are not unacquainted with *Æschulus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, the three Tragic Poets unequall'd yet by any, and the best rule to all who endeavour to write Tragedy. The circumscription of time wherein the whole Drama begins and ends, is according to antient rule, and best example, within the space of 24 hours.

SAmson *made Captive, Blind, and now in the Prison at* Gaza, *there to labour as in a common work-house, on a Festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open Air, to a place nigh, somewhat retir'd there to sit a while and bemean his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old Father* Manoa, *who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this Feast was proclaim'd by the* Philistins *as a day of Thanksgiving for thir deliverance from the hands of* Samson, *which yet more troubles him.* Manoa *then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the* Philistian *Lords for* Samson's *redemption; who in the mean while is visited by other persons; and lastly by a publick Officer to require his coming to the Feast before the Lords and People, to play or shew his strength in thir presence; he at first refuses, dismissing the publick Officer with absolute deryal to come; at length perswaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatnings to fetch him; the Chorus yet remaining on the place,* Manoa *returns full of joyful hope, to procure e're long his Sons deliverance: in the midst of which discourse an Ebrew comes in haste confusedly at first; and afterward more distinctly relating the Catastrophe, what* Samson *had done to the* Philistins, *and by accident to himself; wherewith the Tragedy ends.*

The

The Persons.

Samson.

Manoa *the Father of* Samson.

Dalila *his Wife.*

Harapha *of* Gath.

Publick Officer.

Messenger.

Chorus *of* Danites.

The Scene before the Prison in Gaza.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

Samſ. A Little onward lend thy guiding hand
To theſe dark ſteps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of Sun or ſhade,
There I am wont to ſit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of ſervile toyl,
Daily in the common Priſon elſe enjoyn'd me,
Where I a Priſoner chain'd, ſcarce freely draw
The air impriſon'd alſo, cloſe and damp,
Unwholſom draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of Heav'n freſh-blowing, pure and ſweet,
With day-ſpring born; here leave me to reſpire.

This

This day a solemn Feast the people hold
To *Dagon* thir Sea-Idol, and forbid
Laborious works, unwillingly this rest
Thir Superstition yields me; hence with leave
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease,
Ease to the body some, none to the mind
From restless thoughts, that like a deadly swarm
Of Hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone,
But rush upon me thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.
O wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold
Twice by an Angel, who at last in sight
Of both my Parents all in flames ascended
From off the Altar, where an Off'ring burn'd,
As in a fiery column charioting
His Godlike presence, and from some great act
Or benefit reveal'd to *Abraham*'s race?
Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd

As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must dye
Betray'd, Captiv'd, and both my Eyes put out,
Made of my Enemies the scorn and gaze;
To grind in Brazen Fetters under task
With this Heav'n-gifted strength? O glorious (strength
Put to the labour of a Beast, debas't
Lower then bondslave! Promise was that I
Should *Israel* from *Philistian* yoke deliver;
Ask for this great Deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless in *Gaza* at the Mill with slaves,
Himself in bonds under *Philistian* yoke;
Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
Divine Prediction; what if all foretold
Had been fulfilld but through mine own default,
Whom have I to complain of but my self?
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
Under the Seal of silence could not keep,

But weakly to a woman must reveal it,
O'recome with importunity and tears.
O impotence of mind, in body strong!
But what is strength without a double share
Of wisdom, vast, unwieldy, burdensom,
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
By weakest suttleties, not made to rule,
But to subserve where wisdom bears command.
God, when he gave me strength, to shew withal
How slight the gift was, hung it in my Hair.
But peace, I must not quarrel with the will
Of highest dispensation, which herein
Happ'ly had ends above my reach to know:
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
And proves the sourse of all my miseries;
So many, and so huge, that each apart
Would ask a life to wail, but chief of all,
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
Bliad among enemies, O worse then chains,
Dungeon,

Dungeon, or beggery, or decrepit age!
Light the prime work of God to me is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
Inferiour to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me,
They creep, yet see, I dark in light expos'd
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong,
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own;
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more then half.
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total Eclipse
Without all hope of day!
O first created Beam, and thou great Word,
Let there be light, and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The Sun to me is dark
And silent as the Moon,
When

When she deserts the night
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life it self, if it be true
That light is in the Soul,
She all in every part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd?
So obvious and so easie to be quench't,
And not as feeling through all parts diffus'd,
That she might look at will through every pore?
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light;
As in the land of darkness yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And buried; but O yet more miserable!
My self, my Sepulcher, a moving Grave,
Buried, yet not exempt
By priviledge of death and burial
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs,
But made hereby obnoxious more

To all the miseries of life,
Life in captivity
Among inhuman foes.
But who are these? for with joint pace I hear
The tread of many feet steaming this way;
Perhaps my enemies who come to stare
At my affliction, and perhaps to insult,
Thir daily practice to afflict me more.

Chor. This, this is he; softly a while,
Let us not break in upon him;
O change beyond report, thought, or belief!
See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,
With languish't head unpropt,
As one past hope, abandon'd,
And by himself given over;
In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
O're worn and soild;
Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be hee,
That Heroic, that Renown'd,

Irresistable *Samson*? whom unarm'd (withstand;
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast could
Who tore the Lion, as the Lion tears the Kid,
Ran on embattelld Armies clad in Iron,
And weaponless himself,
Made Arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
Of brazen shield and spear, the hammer'd Cuiras;
Chalybean temper'd steel, and frock of mail
Adamantean Proof;
But safest he who stood aloof,
When insupportably his foot advanc't,
In scorn of thir proud arms and warlike tools,
Spurn'd them to death by Troops. The bold *Ascalonite*
Fled from his Lion ramp, old Warriors turn'd
Thir plated backs under his heel;
Or grovling soild thir crested helmets in the dust.
Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
The Jaw of a dead Ass, his sword of bone,
A thousand fore-skins fell, the flower of *Palestin*

In

In *Ramath-lechi* famous to this day:
Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders (bore
The Gates of *Azza*, Post, and massie Bar
Up to the Hill by *Hebron*, seat of Giants old,
No journey of a Sabbath day, and loaded so;
Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heav'n.
Which shall I first bewail,
Thy Bondage or lost Sight,
Prison within Prison
Inseparably dark?
Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)
The Dungeon of thy self; thy Soul
(Which Men enjoying sight oft without cause com- (plain'd)
Imprison'd now indeed,
In real darkness of the body dwells,
Shut up from outward light
To incorporate with gloomy night;
For inward light alas
Puts forth no visual beam.

O mirror of our fickle state,
Since man on earth unparallel'd!
The rarer thy example stands,
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
Strongest of mortal men,
To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.
For him I reckon not in high estate
Whom long descent of birth
Or the sphear of fortune raises;
But thee whose strength, while vertue was her mate,
Might have subdu'd the Earth,
Universally crown'd with highest praises.

Sam. I hear the sound of words, thir sense the air
Dissolves unjointed e're it reach my ear.

Chor. Hee speaks, let us draw nigh. Matchless in (might,
The glory late of *Israel*, now the grief;
We come thy friends and neighbours not unknown
From *Eshtaol* and *Zora's* fruitful Vale
To visit or bewail thee, or if better,

Counsel

Counsel or Consolation we may bring,
Salve to thy Sores, apt words have power to swage
The tumors of a troubl'd mind,
And are as Balm to fester'd wounds.

Sam. Your coming, Friends, revives me, for I learn
Now of my own experience, not by talk,
How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
Bear in their Superscription (of the most
I would be understood) in prosperous days
They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head
Not to be found, though sought. Yee see, O friends,
How many evils have enclos'd me round;
Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,
Blindness, for had I sight, confus'd with shame,
How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who like a foolish Pilot have shipwrack't,
My Vessel trusted to me from above,
Gloriously rigg'd; and for a word, a tear,
Fool, have divulg'd the secret gift of God

To

To a deceitful Woman: tell me Friends,
Am I not sung and proverb'd for a Fool
In every street, do they not say, how well
Are come upon him his deserts? yet why?
Immeasurable strength they might behold
In me, of wisdom nothing more then mean;
This with the other should, at least, have paird,
These two proportiond ill drove me transverse.

Chor. Tax not divine disposal, wisest Men
Have err'd, and by bad Women been deceiv'd;
And shall again, pretend they ne're so wise.
Dej ct not then so overmuch thy self,
Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides;
Yet truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder
Why thou shouldst wed *Philistian* women rather
Then of thine own Tribe fairer, or as fair,
At least of thy own Nation, and as noble.

Sam. The first I saw at *Timna*, and she pleas'd
Mee, not my Parents, that I sought to wed,

The daughter of an Infidel: they knew not
That what I mention'd was of God; I knew
From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd
The Marriage on; that by occasion hence
I might begin *Israel*'s Deliverance,
The work to which I was divinely call'd;
She proving false, the next I took to Wife
(O that I never had! fond wish too late.)
Was in the Vale of *Sorec*, *Dalila*,
That specious Monster, my accomplisht snare.
I thought it lawful from my former act,
And the same end; still watching to oppress
Israel's oppressours: of what now I suffer
She was not the prime cause, but I my self,
Who vanquisht with a peal of words (O weakness!)
Gave up my fort of silence to a Woman.

Chor. In seeking just occasion to provoke
The *Philistine*, thy Countries Enemy,
Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness:

Yet *Israel* still serves with all his Sons.

Sam. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
On *Israel's* Governours, and Heads of Tribes,
Who seeing those great acts which God had done
Singly by me against their Conquerours
Acknowledg'd not, or not at all consider'd
Deliverance offerd: I on th' other side
Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds,
The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the (dooer;
But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
To count them things worth notice, till at length
Thir Lords the *Philistines* with gather'd powers
Enterd *Judea* seeking mee, who then
Safe to the rock of *Etham* was retir'd,
Not flying, but fore-casting in what place
To set upon them, what advantag'd best;
Mean while the men of *Judah* to prevent
The harrass of thir Land, beset me round;
I willingly on some conditions came

Into

Into thir hands, and they as gladly yield me
To the uncircumcis'd a welcom prey,
Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threds
Toucht with the flame: on thir whole Host I flew
Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd
Their choicest youth; they only liv'd who fled.
Had *Judah* that day join'd, or one whole Tribe,
They had by this possess'd the Towers of *Gath*,
And lorded over them whom now they serve;
But what more oft in Nations grown corrupt,
And by thir vices brought to servitude,
Then to love Bondage more then Liberty,
Bondage with ease then strenuous liberty;
And to despise, or envy, or suspect
Whom God hath of his special favour rais'd
As thir Deliverer; if he aught begin,
How frequent to desert him, and at last
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?

Cho. Thy words to my remembrance bring

How

How *Succoth* and the Fort of *Penuel*
Their great Deliverer contemn'd,
The matchless *Gideon* in pursuit
Of *Madian* and her vanquisht Kings:
And how ingrateful *Ephraim*
Had dealt with *Jephtha*, who by argument,
Not worse then by his shield and spear
Defended *Israel* from the *Ammonite*,
Had not his prowess quell'd thir pride
In that sore battel when so many dy'd
Without Reprieve adjudg'd to death,
For want of well pronouncing *Shibboleth*.

Sam. Of such examples adde mee to the roul,
Mee easily indeed mine may neglect,
But Gods propos'd deliverance not so.

Chor. Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to Men;
Unless there be who think not God at all,
If any be, they walk obscure;

For

For of such Doctrine never was there School,
But the heart of the Fool,
And no man therein Doctor but himself.

Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,
As to his own edicts, found contradicting,
Then give the rains to wandring thought,
Regardless of his glories diminution;
Till by thir own perplexities involv'd
They ravel more, still less resolv'd,
But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine th' interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,
Who made our Laws to bind us, not himself,
And hath full right to exempt
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From National obstriction, without taint
Of sin, or legal debt;
For with his own Laws he can best dispence.

He would not else who never wanted means,

Nor

Nor in respect of the enemy just cause
To set his people free,
Have prompted this Heroic *Nazarite*,
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious Bride,
Unclean, unchaste.
Down Reason then, at least vain reasonings down,
Though Reason here aver
That moral verdit quits her of unclean:
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his.
But see here comes thy reverend Sire
With careful step, Locks white as doune,
Old *Manoah*: advise
Forthwith how thou oughtst to receive him.
Sam. Ay me, another inward grief awak't,
With mention of that name renews th' assault.
Man. Brethren and men of *Dan*, for such ye seem,
Though in this uncouth place; if old respect,
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,
My

My Son now Captive, hither hath inform'd
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age
Came lagging after; say if he be here.
Chor. As signal now in low dejected state,
As earst in highest, behold him where he lies.
Man. O miserable change! is this the man,
That invincible *Samson*, far renown'd,
The dread of *Israel's* foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to Angels walk'd thir streets,
None offering fight; who single combatant
Duell'd thir Armies rank't in proud array,
Himself an Army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward arm'd
At one spears length. O ever failing
In mortal strength! and oh what not in man
Deceivable and vain! Nay what thing good
Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane?
I pray'd for Children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach; I gain'd a Son,
Such

Such a Son as all Men hail'd me happy ;
Who would be now a Father in my stead ?
O wherefore did God grant me my request,
And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd ?
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
360 Our earnest Prayers, then giv'n with solemn hand
As Graces, draw a Scorpions tail behind ?
For this did the Angel twice descend ? for this
Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a Plant ;
Select, and Sacred, Glorious for a while,
The miracle of men : then in an hour
Ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
Thy Foes derision, Captive, Poor, and Blind
Into a Dungeon thrust, to work with Slaves ?
Alas methinks whom God hath chosen once
370 To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
He should not so o'rewhelm, and as a thrall
Subject him to so foul indignities,
Be it but for honours sake of former deeds.

Sams.

Sam. Appoint not heavenly disposition, Father,
Nothing of all these evils hath befall'n me
But justly ; I my self have brought them on,
Sole Author I, sole cause : if aught seem vile,
As vile hath been my folly, who have profan'd
The mystery of God giv'n me under pledge
380 Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
A *Canaanite*, my faithless enemy.
This well I knew, nor was at all surpris'd,
But warn'd by oft experience : did not she
Of *Timna* first betray me, and reveal
The secret wrested from me in her highth
Of Nuptial Love profest, carrying it strait
To them who had corrupted her, my Spies,
And Rivals ? In this other was there found
More Faith ? who also in her prime of love,
390 Spousal embraces, vitiated with Gold,
Though offer'd only, by the sent conceiv'd
Her spurious first-born ; Treason against me ?

Thrice

Thrice she assay'd with flattering prayers and sighs,
And amorous reproaches to win from me
My capital secret, in what part my strength
Lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might know:
Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport
Her importunity, each time perceiving
How openly, and with what impudence
She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worse
Then undissembl'd hate) with what contempt
She sought to make me Traytor to my self;
Yet the fourth time, when mustring all her wiles,
With blandisht parlies, feminine assaults,
Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not day nor night
To storm me over-watch't, and wearied out.
At times when men seek most repose and rest,
I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,
Who with a grain of manhood well resolv'd
Might easily have shook off all her snares:
But foul effeminacy held me yok't

Her

Her Bond-slave; O indignity, O blot
To Honour and Religion! servil mind
Rewarded well with servil punishment!
The base degree to which I now am fall'n,
These rags, this grinding, is not yet so base
As was my former servitude, ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
True slavery, and that blindness worse then this,
That saw not how degeneratly I serv'd.

Man. I cannot praise thy Marriage choises, Son,
Rather approv'd them not; but thou didst plead
Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
Find some occasion to infest our Foes.
I state not that; this I am sure; our Foes
Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
Thir Captive, and thir triumph; thou the sooner
Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms
To violate the sacred trust of silence
Deposited within thee; which to have kept

Tacit,

Tacit, was in thy power; true; and thou bear'ſt
Enough, and more the burden of that fault;
Bitterly haſt thou paid, and ſtill art paying
That rigid ſcore. A worſe thing yet remains;
This day the *Philiſtines* a popular Feaſt
Here celebrate in *Gaza*; and proclaim
Great Pomp, and Sacrifice, and Praiſes loud
To *Dagon*, as their God who hath deliver'd
Thee *Samſon* bound and blind into thir hands,
Them out of thine, who ſlew'ſt them many a ſlain.
So *Dagon* ſhall be magnifi'd, and God,
Beſides whom is no God, compar'd with Idols,
Diſglorifi'd, blaſphem'd, and had in ſcorn
By th' Idolatrous rout amidſt thir wine;
Which to have come to paſs by means of thee,
Samſon, of all thy ſufferings think the heavieſt,
Of all reproach the moſt with ſhame that ever
Could have befall'n thee and thy Fathers houſe.

Sam. Father, I do acknowledge and confeſs
That

That I this honour, I this pomp have brought
To *Dagon*, and advanc'd his praiſes high
Among the Heathen round; to God have brought
Diſhonour, obloquie, and op't the mouths
Of Idoliſts, and Atheiſts; have brought ſcan
To *Iſrael*, diffidence of God, and doubt
In feeble hearts, propenſe anough before
To waver, or fall off and joyn with Idols;
Which is my chief affliction, ſhame and ſorrow,
The anguiſh of my Soul, that ſuffers not
Mine eie to harbour ſleep, or thoughts to reſt.
This only hope relieves me, that the ſtrife
With me hath end; all the conteſt is now
'Twixt God and *Dagon*; *Dagon* hath preſum'd,
Me overthrown, to enter liſts with God,
His Deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of *Abraham*. He, be ſure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd,
But will ariſe and his great name aſſert:

Dagon must stoop, and shall e're long receive
Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted Trophies won on me,
And with confusion blank his Worshippers.

Man. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these (words
I as a Prophecy receive: for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name
Against all competition, nor will long
Endure it, doubtful whether God be Lord,
Or *Dagon.* But for thee what shall be done?
Thou must not in the mean while here forgot
Lie in this miserable loathsom plight
Neglected. I already have made way
To some *Philistian* Lords, with whom to treat
About thy ransom: well they may by this
Have satisfi'd thir utmost of revenge
By pains and slaveries, worse then death inflicted
On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

Sam.

Sam. Spare that proposal, Father, spare the trouble
Of that sollicitation; let me here,
As I deserve, pay on my punishment;
And expiate, if possible, my crime,
Shameful garrulity. To have reveal'd
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
How hainous had the fact been, how deserving
Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded
All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
The mark of fool set on his front?
But I Gods counsel have not kept, his holy secret
Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,
Weakly at least, and shamefully: A sin
That Gentiles in thir Parables condemn
To thir abyss and horrid pains confin'd.

Man. Be penitent and for thy fault contrite,
But act not in thy own affliction, Son,
Repent the sin, but if the punishment
Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids;

Or th' execution leave to high disposal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thy self; perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;
Who evermore approves and more accepts
(Best pleas'd with humble and filial submission)
Him who imploring mercy sues for life,
Then who self-rigorous chooses death as due;
Which argues over-just, and self-displeas'd
For self-offence, more then for God offended.
Reject not then what offerd means, who knows
But God hath set before us, to return thee
Home to thy countrey and his sacred house,
Where thou mayst bring thy off'rings, to avert
His further ire, with praiers and vows renew'd.

Sam. His pardon I implore; but as for life,
To what end should I seek it? when in strength
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes
With youthful courage and magnanimous thoughts
Of

Of birth from Heav'n foretold and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond
The Sons of *Anac*, famous now and blaz'd,
Fearless of danger, like a petty God
I walk'd about admir'd of all and dreaded
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.
Then swoll'n with pride into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Softn'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap
Of a deceitful Concubine who shore me
Like a tame Weather, all my precious fleece,
Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,
Shav'n, and disarm'd among my enemies.

Chor. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous Warriour overturns,
Thou couldst repress, nor did the dancing Rubie
Sparkling,

Sparkling, out-pow'rd, the flavor, or the smell,
Or taste that cheers the heart of Gods and men,
Allure thee from the cool Crystalline stream.

Sam. Where ever fountain or fresh current flow'd
Against the Eastern ray, translucent, pure.
With touch ætherial of Heav'ns fiery rod
I drank, from the clear milkie juice allaying
Thirst, and refresht; nor envy'd them the grape
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

Chor. O madness, to think use of strongest wines
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,
When God with these forbid'n made choice to rear
His mighty Champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

Sam. But what avail'd this temperance, not com-
(pleat
Against another object more enticing?
What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another to let in the foe
Effeminatly vanquish't? by which means,

Now

Now Blind, dishearth'n'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd,
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My Nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the houshold hearth,
A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,
Or pitied object, these redundant locks
Robustious to no purpose clustring down,
Vain monument of strength; till length of years
And sedentary numness craze my limbs
To a contemptible old age obscure.
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread,
Till vermin or the draff of servil food
Consume me, and oft-invocated death
Hast'n the welcom end of all my pains.

Man. Wilt thou then serve the *Philistines* with that
(gift
Which was expressly giv'n thee to annoy them?
Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,
Inglorious, unimploy'd, with age out-worn.
But God who caus'd a fountain at thy prayer

From

From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay
After the brunt of battel, can as easie
Cause light again within thy eies to spring,
Wherewith to serve him better then thou hast;
And I perswade me so; why else this strength
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?
His might continues in thee not for naught,
590 Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

Sam. All otherwise to me my thoughts portend,
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,
Nor th' other light of life continue long,
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand:
So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat, nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of her self;
My race of glory run, and race of shame,
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

600 *Man.* Believe not these suggestions which proceed
From anguish of the mind and humours black,
That

That mingle with thy fancy. However
Must not omit a Fathers timely care
To prosecute the means of thy deliverance
By ransom or how else: mean while be calm,
And healing words from these thy friends admit.

Sam. O that torment should not be confin'd
To the bodies wounds and sores
With maladies innumerable
610 In heart, head, brest, and reins;
But must secret passage find
To th' inmost mind,
There exercise all his fierce accidents,
And on her purest spirits prey,
As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
With answerable pains, but more intense,
Though void of corporal sense.

My griefs not only pain me
As a lingring disease,
620 But finding no redress, ferment and rage,

Nor less then wounds immedicable
Ranckle, and fester, and gangrene,
To black mortification.
Thoughts my Tormenters arm'd with deadly stings
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
Dire inflammation which no cooling herb
Or medcinal liquor can asswage,
Nor breath of Vernal Air from snowy *Alp*.
Sleep hath forsook and giv'n me o're
To deaths benumming Opium as my only cure.
Thence faintings, swounings of despair,
And sense of Heav'ns desertion.
I was his nursling once and choice delight,
His destin'd from the womb,
Promisd by Heavenly message twice descending,
Under his special eie
Abstemious I grew up and thriv'd amain;
He led me on to mightiest deeds

Above

Above the nerve of mortal arm
Against the uncircumcis'd, our enemies.
But now hath cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies,
Whom I by his appointment had provok't,
Left me all helpless with th' irreparable loss
Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated
The subject of thir cruelty, or scorn.
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless;
This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No long petition, speedy death,
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.
Chor. Many are the sayings of the wise
In antient and in modern books enroll'd;
Extolling Patience as the truest fortitude;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All chances incident to mans frail life.
Consolatories writ

With

With studied argument, and much persuasion sought
660 Lenient of grief and anxious thought,
But to th' afflicted in his pangs their sound
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune,
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint,
Unless he feel within
Some sourse of consolation from above;
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,
And fainting spirits uphold.

God of our Fathers, what is man!
That thou towards him with hand so various,
670 Or might I say contrarious,
Temperst thy providence through his short course,
Not evenly, as thou rul'st
The Angelic orders and inferiour creatures mute,
Irrational and brute.
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wandring loose about
Grow up and perish, as the summer flie,

Heads

Heads without name no more rememberd,
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd
To some great work, thy glory,
And peoples safety, which in part they effect:
Yet toward these thus dignifi'd, thou oft
Amidst thir highth of noon,
Changest thy countenance, and thy hand with no r.
Of highest favours past (gar.
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
To life obscur'd, which were a fair dismission,
But throw'st them lower then thou didst exalt them
Unseemly falls in human eie, (high,
Too grievous for the trespass or omission,
Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword
Of Heathen and prophane, thir carkasses
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd:
Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,

And

And condemnation of the ingrateful multitude:
If these they scape, perhaps in poverty
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
Painful diseases and deform'd,
In crude old age;
Though not disordinate, yet caussless suffring
The punishment of dissolute days, in fine,
Just or unjust, alike seem miserable,
For oft alike, both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious Champion,
The Image of thy strength, and mighty minister.
What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already?
Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

But who is this, what thing of Sea or Land?
Femal of sex it seems,
That so bedeckt, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way sailing
Like a stately Ship

Of *Tarsus*, bound for th' Isles
Of *Javan* or *Gadier*
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,
Courted by all the winds that hold them play,
An Amber sent of odorous perfume
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
Some rich *Philistian* Matron she may seem,
And now at nearer view, no other certain
Then *Dalila* thy wife.

Sam. My Wife, my Traytress, let her not come near me.

Cho. Yet on she moves, now stands & eies thee fixt,
About t' have spoke; but now, with head declin'd
Like a fair flower surcharg'd with dew, she weeps,
And words addrest seem into tears dissolv'd,
Wetting the borders of her silk'n veil:
But now again she makes address to speak.

Dal. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, *Samson*,

Which to have merited, without excuse,
I cannot but acknowledge; yet if tears
May expiate (though the fact more evil drew
In the perverse event then I foresaw)
My penance hath not slack'n'd, though my pardon
No way assur'd. But conjugal affection
Prevailing over fear, and timerous doubt
Hath led me on desirous to behold
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate.
If aught in my ability may serve
To light'n what thou suffer'st, and appease
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,
Though late, yet in some part to recompense
My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.

Sam. Out, out *Hyæna*; these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorse,

Confess

Confess, and promise wonders in her change,
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His vertue or weakness which way to assail:
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits;
That wisest and best men full oft beguil'd
With goodness principl'd not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
Entangl'd with a poysnous bosom snake,
If not by quick destruction soon cut off
As I by thee, to Ages an example.

Dal. Yet hear me *Samson*; not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence,
But that on th' other side if it be weigh'd
By it self, with aggravations not surcharg'd,
Or else with just allowance counterpois'd,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find

The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me, but incident to all our sex,
Curiosity, inquisitive, importune
Of secrets, then with like infirmity
To publish them, both common female faults:
Was it not weakness also to make known
For importunity, that is for naught,
Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?
To what I did thou shewdst me first the way.
But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not.
Nor shouldst thou have trusted that to womans frailty
E're I to thee, thou to thy self wast cruel.
Let weakness then with weakness come to parl
So near related, or the same of kind,
Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine
The gentler, if severely thou exact not
More strength from me, then in thy self was found.
And what if Love, which thou interpret'st hate,
The

The jealousie of Love, powerful of sway
In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,
Caus'd what I did? I saw thee mutable
Of fancy, feard lest one day thou wouldst leave me
As her at *Timna*, sought by all means therefore
How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:
No better way I saw then by importuning
To learn thy secrets, get into my power
Thy key of strength and safety: thou wilt say,
Why then reveal'd? I was assur'd by those
Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd
Against thee but safe custody, and hold:
That made for me, I knew that liberty
Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,
While I at home sate full of cares and fears
Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed;
Here I should still enjoy thee day and night
Mine and Loves prisoner, not the *Philistines*,
Whole to my self, unhazarded abroad,
Fear-

Fearless at home of partners in my love.
These reasons in Loves law have past for good,
Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps;
And Love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much wo,
Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.
Be not unlike all others, not austere
As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.
If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
In uncompassionate anger do not so.

20 *Sam.* How cunningly the sorceress displays
Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine?
That malice not repentance brought thee hither,
By this appears: I gave, thou say'st, th' example,
I led the way; bitter reproach, but true,
I to my self was false e're thou to me,
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
Take to thy wicked deed: which when thou seest
Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
Con-

fess it feign'd, weakness is thy excuse,
d I believe it, weakness to resist
stian gold: if weakness may excuse,
hat Murtherer, what Traytor, Parricide,
estuous, Sacrilegious, but may plead it?
l wickedness is weakness: that plea therefore
ith God or Man will gain thee no remission.
Love constrain'd thee; call it furious rage
satisfie thy lust: Love seeks to have Love;
love how couldst thou hope, who tookst the way
raise in me inexpiable hate,
owing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd?
vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
by evasions thy crime uncoverst more.

Dal. Since thou determinst weakness for no plea
man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
r what assaults I had, what snares besides,
hat sieges girt me round, e're I consented;
hich might have aw'd the best resolv'd of men,
The

The constantest to have yielded without blame.
It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
That wrought with me: thou know'st the Magistrates
And Princes of my countrey came in person,
Sollicited, commanded, threatn'd, urg'd,
Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil Duty
And of Religion, press'd how just it was,
How honourable, how glorious to entrap
A common enemy, who had destroy'd
Such numbers of our Nation: and the Priest
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
Preaching how meritorious with the gods
It would be to ensnare an irreligious
Dishonourer of *Dagon*: what had I
To oppose against such powerful arguments?
Only my love of thee held long debate;
And combated in silence all these reasons
With hard contest: at length that grounded maxim
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of

Of wisest men; that to the public good
Private respects must yield; with grave authority
Took full possession of me and prevail'd;
Vertue, as I thought, truth, duty so enjoyning.

Sam. I thought where all thy circling wiles would (end;
Inveign'd Religion, smooth hypocrisie.
But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
Bin, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
I before all the daughters of my Tribe
And of my Nation chose thee from among
My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'st,
Too well, unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,
Not out of levity, but over-powr'd
By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then
Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband?
Then, as since then, thy countries foe profest;
Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave

Parents and countrey; nor was I their subject,
Nor under their protection but my own,
Thou mine, not theirs: if aught against my life
890 Thy countrey sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
Against the law of nature, law of nations,
No more thy countrey, but an impious crew
Of men conspiring to uphold thir state
By worse then hostile deeds, violating the ends
For which our countrey is a name so dear;
Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee;
To please thy gods thou didst it; gods unable
To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
900 Of their own deity, Gods cannot be:
Less therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd, or fear'd,
These false pretexts and varnish'd colours failing,
Bare in thy guilt how foul must thou appear?

Dal. In argument with men a woman ever
Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.

Sam.

Sam. For want of words no doubt, or lack of (breath,
Witness when I was worried with thy peals.

Dal. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
In what I thought would have succeeded best.
Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, *Samson*,
Afford me place to shew what recompence
Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,
Misguided; only what remains past cure
Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
To afflict thy self in vain: though sight be lost,
Life yet hath many solaces, enjoy'd
Where other senses want not their delights
At home in leisure and domestic ease,
Exempt from many a care and chance to which
Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.
I to the Lords will intercede, not doubting
Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
From forth this loathsom prison-house, to abide
With me, where my redoubl'd love and care

With

With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
May ever tend about thee to old age
With all things grateful chear'd, and so suppli'd,
That what by me thou hast lost thou least shalt miss.

Sams. No, no, of my condition take no care;
It fits not; thou and I long since are twain;
Nor think me so unwary or accurst
To bring my feet again into the snare
Where once I have been caught; I know thy trains
Though dearly to my cost, thy ginns, and toyls;
Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms
No more on me have power, their force is null'd,
So much of Adders wisdom I have learn't
To fence my ear against thy sorceries.
If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
Lov'd, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone could hate me
Thy Husband, slight me, sell me, and forgo me;
How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
Deceiveable, in most things as a child

Help

Helpless, thence easily contemn'd, and scorn'd,
And last neglected? How wouldst thou insult
When I must live uxorious to thy will
In perfet thraldom, how again betray me,
Bearing my words and doings to the Lords
To gloss upon, and censuring, frown or smile?
This Gaol I count the house of Liberty
To thine whose doors my feet shall never enter.

Dal. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.

Sam. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance (wake
My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
At distance I forgive thee, go with that;
Bewail thy falshood, and the pious works
Thou hast brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illustrious women, faithful wives:
Cherish thy hast'n'd widowhood with the gold
Of Matrimonial treason: so farewel.

Dal. I see thou art implacable, more deaf
To prayers, then winds and seas, yet winds to seas

Are

Are reconcil'd at length, and Sea to Shore :
Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,
Eternal tempest never to be calm'd.
Why do I humble thus my self, and suing
For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate?
Bid go with evil omen and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounc't?
To mix with thy concernments I desist
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.
Fame if not double-fac't is double-mouth'd,
And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds,
On both his wings, one black, th' other white,
Bears greatest names in his wild aerie flight.
My name perhaps among the Circumcis'd
In *Dan*, in *Judah*, and the bordering Tribes,
To all posterity may stand defam'd,
With malediction mention'd, and the blot
Of falshood most unconjugal traduc't.
But in my countrey where I most desire,

In

Ecron, *Gaza*, *Asdod*, and in *Gath*
Shall be nam'd among the famousest
Of Women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who to save
Her countrey from a fierce destroyer, chose
Above the faith of wedlock-bands, my tomb
With odours visited and annual flowers.
Not less renown'd then in Mount *Ephraim*,
Jael, who with inhospitable guile
Smote *Sisera* sleeping through the Temples nail'd.
Nor shall I count it hainous to enjoy
The public marks of honour and reward
Conferr'd upon me, for the piety
Which to my countrey I was judg'd to have shewn.
At this who ever envies or repines
Leave him to his lot, and like my own.
Chor. She's gone, a manifest Serpent by her sting
Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.
Sam. So let her go, God sent her to debase me,

And

And aggravate my folly who committed
To ſuch a viper his moſt ſacred truſt
Of ſecreſie, my ſafety, and my life.

Chor. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath ſtrange (power,
After offence returning, to regain
Love once poſſeſt, nor can be eaſily
Repuls't, without much inward paſſion felt
And ſecret ſting of amorous remorſe.

Sam. Love-quarrels oft in pleaſing concord end,
Not wedlock-trechery endangering life.

Cho. It is not vertue, wiſdom, valour, wit,
Strength, comlineſs of ſhape, or ampleſt merit
That womans love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to ſay,
Harder to hit,
(Which way ſoever men refer it)
Much like thy riddle, *Samſon*, in one day
Or ſeven, though one ſhould mu ſing ſit;
If any of theſe or all, the *Timnian* bride

Had

d not ſo ſoon preferr'd
y Paranymph, worthleſs to thee compar'd,
ceſſour in thy bed,
r both ſo looſly diſally'd
ir nuptials, nor this laſt ſo trecherouſly
d ſhorn the fatal harveſt of thy head.
t for that ſuch outward ornament
s laviſh't on thir Sex, that inward gifts
re left for haſt unfiniſh't, judgment ſcant,
acity not rais'd to apprehend
value what is beſt
choice, but oftest to affect the wrong?
was too much of ſelf-love mixt,
conſtancy no root infixt,
t either they love nothing, or not long?
What e're it be, to wiſeſt men and beſt
ming at firſt all heavenly under virgin veil,
modeſt, meek, demure,
e join'd, the contrary ſhe proves, a thorn

In-

Inteſtin, far within defenſive arms
A cleaving miſchief, in his way to vertue
Adverſe and turbulent, or by her charms
Draws him awry enſlav'd
With dotage, and his ſenſe deprav'd
To folly and ſhameful deeds which ruin ends.
What Pilot ſo expert but needs muſt wreck
Embarqu'd with ſuch a Stears-mate at the Helm?
Favour'd of Heav'n who finds
One vertuous rarely found,
That in domeſtic good combines:
Happy that houſe! his way to peace is ſmooth:
But vertue which breaks through all oppoſition,
And all temptation can remove,
Moſt ſhines and moſt is acceptable above.
Therefore Gods univerſal Law
Gave to the man deſpotic power
Over his female in due awe,
Nor from that right to part an hour,

Smile

Smile ſhe or lowre:
So ſhall he leaſt confuſion draw
On his whole life, not ſway'd
By female uſurpation, nor diſmay'd.
But had we beſt retire, I ſee a ſtorm?
Sam. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempeſt brings.
Sam. Be leſs abſtruſe, my riddling days are paſt.
Chor. Look now for no inchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his ſtride,
The Giant *Harapha* of *Gath*, his look
Haughty as is his pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither
Less conjecture then when firſt I ſaw
The ſumptuous *Dalila* floating this way:
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.
Sam. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.
Chor. His fraught we ſoon ſhall know, he now arrives.

Har. I come not *Samson*, to condole thy chance,
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
Though for no friendly intent. I am of *Gath*,
Men call me *Harapha*, of stock renown'd
As *Og* or *Anak* and the *Emims* old
That *Kiriathaim* held, thou knowst me now
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd
Incredible to me, in this displeas'd,
That I was never present on the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tri'd
Each others force in camp or listed field:
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Sam. The way to know were not to see but taste.

Har. Dost thou already single me; I thought
Gives and the Mill had tam'd thee? O that fortune
Had brought me to the field where thou art fam'd

To have wrought such wonders with an Asses Jaw;
Should have forc'd thee soon wish other arms,
Or left thy carkass where the Ass lay thrown:
So had the glory of Prowess been recover'd
To *Palestine*, won by a *Philistine*
From the unforeskinn'd race, of whom thou bear'st
The highest name for valiant Acts, that honour
Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
Lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

Sam. Boast not of what thou wouldst (but do)
What then thou would'st, thou seest it in thy hand.

Har. To combat with a blind man I disdain,
And thou hast need much washing to be toucht.

Sam. Such usage as your honourable Lords
Afford me assassinated and betray'd,
Who durst not with thir whole united powers
In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
Nor in the house with chamber Ambushes
Close-banded durst attaque me, no not sleeping,

Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold
Breaking her Marriage Faith to circumvent me.
Therefore without feign'd shifts let be assign'd
Some narrow place enclos'd, where sight may give (thee,
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy Helmet
And Brigandine of brass, thy broad Habergeon,
Vant-brass and Greves, and Gauntlet, add thy Spear
A Weavers beam, and seven-times-folded shield,
I only with an Oak'n staff will meet thee,
And raise such out-cries on thy clatter'd Iron,
Which long shall not with-hold mee from thy head,
That in a little time while breath remains thee,
Thou oft shalt wish thy self at *Gath* to boast
Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
To *Samson*, but shalt never see *Gath* more.

Har. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms
Which greatest Heroes have in battel worn,
Their ornament and safety, had not spells

And

And black enchantments, some Magicians Art
Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from Heaven
Feignd'st at thy birth was giv'n thee in thy hair,
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
Were bristles rang'd like those that ridge the back
Of chaf't wild Boars, or ruffl'd Porcupines.

Sam. I know no Spells, use no forbidden Arts;
My trust is in the living God who gave me
At my Nativity this strength, diffus'd
No less through all my sinews, joints and bones,
Then thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if *Dagon* be thy god,
Go to his Temple, invocate his aid
With solemnest devotion, spread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To frustrate and dissolve these Magic spells,
Which I to be the power of *Israel's* God
Avow, and challenge *Dagon* to the test,

Offering

Offering to combat thee his Champion bold,
With th' utmost of his Godhead seconded:
Then thou shalt see, or rather to thy sorrow
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

Har. Presume not on thy God, what e're he be,
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from his people, and delivered up
170 Into thy Enemies hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee
Into the common Prison, there to grind
Among the Slaves and Asses thy comrades,
As good for nothing else, no better service
With those thy boyst'rous locks, no worthy match
For valour to assail, nor by the sword
Of noble Warriour, so to stain his honour,
But by the Barbers razor best subdu'd.

Sam. All these indignities, for such they are
180 From thine, these evils I deserve and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Justly

Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon
Whose ear is ever open; and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant;
In confidence whereof I once again
Defie thee to the trial of mortal fight,
By combat to decide whose god is God,
Thine or whom I with *Israel's* Sons adore.

Har. Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting
190 He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A Murtherer, a Revolter, and a Robber.

Sam. Tongue-doubtie Giant, how dost thou prove (me these?

Har. Is not thy Nation subject to our Lords?
Thir Magistrates confest it, when they took thee
As a League-breaker and deliver'd bound
Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed
Notorious murder on those thirty men
At *Askalon*, who never did thee harm,
Then like a Robber stripdst them of thir robes?
200 The *Philistines*, when thou hadst broke the league,
Went

Went up with armed powers thee only seeking,
To others did no violence nor spoil.

Sam. Among the Daughters of the *Philistines*
I chose a Wife, which argu'd me no foe;
And in your City held my Nuptial Feast:
But your ill-meaning Politician Lords,
Under pretence of Bridal friends and guests,
Appointed to await me thirty spies,
Who threatning cruel death constrain'd the bride
To wring from me and tell to them my secret,
That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd.
When I perceiv'd all set on enmity,
As on my enemies, where ever chanc'd,
I us'd hostility, and took thir spoil
To pay my underminers in thir coin.
My Nation was subjected to your Lords.
It was the force of Conquest; force with force
Is well ejected when the Conquer'd can.
But I a private person, whom my Countrey

As a league-breaker gave up bound, presum'd
Single Rebellion and did Hostile Acts.
I was no private but a person rais'd
With strength sufficient and command from Heav'n
To free my Countrey; if their servile minds
Me their Deliverer sent would not receive,
But to thir Masters gave me up for nought,
Th'unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.
I was to do my part from Heav'n assign'd,
And had perform'd it if my known offence
Had not disabl'd me, not all your force:
These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant
Though by his blindness maim'd for high attempts,
Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

Har. With thee a Man condemn'd, a Slave enrol'd,
Hence by the Law to capital punishment?
I fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

Sam. Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey (me,

To

To descant on my strength, and give thy verdit?
Come nearer, part not hence so slight inform'd;
But take good heed my hand survey not thee.

Har. O *Baal-zebub* ! can my ears unus'd
Hear these dishonours, and not render death ?

Sam. No man with-holds thee, nothing from thy (hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free.

Har. This insolence other kind of answer fits.

Sams. Go bafflʼd coward, lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the Air, then dash thee down
To the hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

Har. By *Astaroth* e're long thou shalt lament
These braveries in Irons loaden on thee.

Chor. His Giantship is gone somewhat crest-fall'n,
Stalking with less unconsci'nable strides,
And lower looks, but in a sultrie chase.

Sam. I dread him not, nor all his Giant-brood,
Though Fame divulg'd him Father of five Sons
All of Gigantic size, *Goliah* chief.

Chor. He will directly to the Lords, I fear,
And with malitious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

Sam. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept the offer or not,
And that he durst not plain enough appear'd.
Much more affliction then already felt
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;
If they intend advantage of my labours
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping
With no small profit daily to my owners.
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence,
The worst that he can give, to me the best.
Yet so it may fall out, because thir end

Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw thir own ruin who attempt the deed.

Chor. Oh how comely it is and how reviving
To the Spirits of just men long oppreſt!
When God into the hands of thir deliverer
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the Earth, th' oppreſſour,
The brute and boiſt'rous force of violent men
Hardy and induſtrious to ſupport
Tyrannic power, but raging to purſue
The righteous and all ſuch as honour Truth;
He all thir Ammunition
And feats of War defeats
With plain Heroic magnitude of mind
And celeſtial vigour arm'd,
Thir Armories and Magazins contemns,
Renders them uſeleſs, while
With winged expedition
Swift as the lightning glance he executes

His

His errand on the wicked, who ſurpris'd
Loſe thir defence diſtracted and amaz'd.
But patience is more oft the exerciſe
Of Saints, the trial of thir fortitude,
Making them each his own Deliverer,
And Victor over all
That tyrannie or fortune can inflict,
Either of theſe is in thy lot,
Samson, with might endu'd
Above the Sons of men; but ſight bereav'd
May chance to number thee with thoſe
Whom Patience finally muſt crown.
This Idols day hath bin to thee no day of reſt,
Labouring thy mind
More then the working day thy hands,
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind.
For I deſcry this way
Some other tending, in his hand
A Scepter or quaint ſtaff he bears,

Comes

Comes on amain, speed in his look.
By his habit I discern him now
A Public Officer, and now at hand.
His message will be short and voluble.

Off. Ebrews, the Pris'ner *Samson* here I seek.

320 *Chor.* His manacles remark him, there he sits.

Off. Samson, to thee our Lords thus bid me say;
This day to *Dagon* is a solemn Feast,
With Sacrifices, Triumph, Pomp, and Games;
Thy strength they know surpassing human race,
And now some public proof thereof require
To honour this great Feast, and great Assembly;
Rise therefore with all speed and come along,
Where I will see thee heartn'd and fresh clad
To appear as fits before th' illustrious Lords.

330 *Sam.* Thou knowst I am an *Ebrew*, therefore tell (them,
Our Law forbids at thir Religious Rites
My presence; for that cause I cannot come.

Off. This answer, be assur'd, will not content them.

Sam.

Sam. Have they not Sword-players, and ev'ry sort
f Gymnic Artists, Wrestlers, Riders, Runners,
glers and Dancers, Antics, Mummers, Mimirs,
t they must pick me out with shackles tir'd,
nd over-labour'd at thir publick Mill,
o make them sport with blind activity?
Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels
n my refusal to distress me more,
r make a game of my calamities?
eturn the way thou cam'st, I will not come.

Off. Regard thy self, this will offend them highly.

Sam. My self? my conscience and internal peace,
n they think me so broken, so debas'd
ith corporal servitude, that my mind ever
ill condescend to such absurd commands?
lthough thir drudge, to be thir fool or jester,
nd in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief
o shew them feats, and play before thir god,
he worst of all indignities, yet on me

Joyn'd

Joyn'd with extream contempt? I will not come.

Off. My message was impos'd on me with speed,
Brooks no delay: is this thy resolution?

Sam. So take it with what speed thy message needs.

Off. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

Sa. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

Chor. Consider, *Samson*; matters now are strain'd
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break;
He's gone, and who knows how he may report
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?
Expect another message more imperious,
More Lordly thund'ring then thou well wilt bear.

Sam. Shall I abuse this Consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair
After my great transgression, so requite
Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to Idols;
A *Nazarite* in place abominable
Vaunting my strength in honour to thir *Dagon*?
Besides,

Besides, how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, prophane?

Chor. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the *Philistines*,
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean.

Sam. Not in thir Idol-worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those who have me in thir civil power.

Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

Sam. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds
But who constrains me to the Temple of *Dagon*,
Not dragging? the *Philistian* Lords command.
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely; venturing to displease
God for the fear of Man, and Man prefer,
Of God behind: which in his jealousie
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
Yet that he may dispense with me or thee
Present in Temples at Idolatrous Rites
For some important cause, thou needst not doubt.

Chor. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my (reach.

Sam. Be of good courage, I begin to feel
Some rouzing motions in me which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this Messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our Law, or stain my vow of *Nazarite.*
If there be aught of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.

Chor. In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns.

Off. Samson, this second message from our Lords
To thee I am bid say. Art thou our Slave,
Our Captive, at the public Mill our drudge,
And dar'st thou at our sending and command
Dispute thy coming? come without delay;
Or we shall find such Engines to assail
And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,
Though thou wert firmlier fastn'd then a rock.

Sam.

Sam. I could be well content to try thir Art,
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious.
Yet knowing thir advantages too many,
Because they shall not trail me through thir streets
Like a wild Beast, I am content to go.
Masters commands come with a power resistless
To such as owe them absolute subjection;
And for a life who will not change his purpose?
(So mutable are all the ways of men)
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply
Scandalous or forbidden in our Law.

Off. I praise thy resolution, doff these links:
By this compliance thou wilt win the Lords
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

Sam. Brethren farewel, your company along
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
To see me girt with Friends; and how the sight
Of me as of a common Enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them

I know not. Lords are Lordliest in thir wine;
And the well-feasted Priest then soonest fir'd
With zeal, if aught Religion seem concern'd:
No less the people on thir Holy-days
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable;
Happ'n what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our Law, my Nation, or my self,
The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

Chor. Go, and the Holy One
Of *Israel* be thy guide
To what may serve his glory best, & spread his name
Great among the Heathen round:
Send thee the Angel of thy Birth, to stand
Fast by thy side, who from thy Fathers field
Rode up in flames after his message told
Of thy conception, and be now a shield
Of fire; that Spirit that first rusht on thee
In the Camp of *Dan*

Be

Be efficacious in thee now at need.
For never was from Heaven imparted
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
As in thy wond'rous actions hath been seen.
But wherefore comes old *Manoa* in such hast
With youthful steps? much livelier then e're while
He seems: supposing here to find his Son,
Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

Man. Peace with you brethren; my inducement hither
Was not at present here to find my Son,
By order of the Lords new parted hence
To come and play before them at thir Feast.
I heard all as I came, the City rings
And numbers thither flock, I had no will,
Lest I should see him forc't to things unseemly.
But that which mov'd my coming now, was chiefly
To give ye part with me what hope I have
With good success to work his liberty.

Cho. That hope would much rejoyce us to partake

 With

With thee; say reverend Sire, we thirst to hear.

Man. I have attempted one by one the Lords
Either at home, or through the high street passing,
With supplication prone and Fathers tears
To accept of ransom for my Son thir pris'ner,
Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
That part most reverenc'd *Dagon* and his Priests,
Others more moderate seeming, but thir aim
Private reward, for which both God and State
They easily would set to sale, a third
More generous far and civil, who confess'd
They had anough reveng'd, having reduc't
Thir foe to misery beneath thir fears,
The rest was magnanimity to remit,
If some convenient ransom were propos'd.
What noise or shout was that? it tore the Skie.

Chor. Doubtless the people shouting to behold
Thir once great dread, captive, & blind before them,
Or

Or at some proof of strength before them shown.

Man. His ransom, if my whole inheritance
May compass it, shall willingly be paid
And numberd down: much rather I shall chuse
To live the poorest in my Tribe, then richest,
And he in that calamitous prison left.
No, I am fixt not to part hence without him.
For his redemption all my Patrimony,
If need be, I am ready to forgo
And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

Chor. Fathers are wont to lay up for thir Sons,
Thou for thy Son art bent to lay out all;
Sons wont to nurse thir Parents in old age,
Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy Son.
Made older then thy age through eye-sight lost.

Man. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him sitting in the house, enobl'd
With all those high exploits by him atchiev'd,
And on his shoulders waving down those locks,
That

That of a Nation arm'd the strength contain'd:
And I perswade me God had not permitted
His strength again to grow up with his hair
Garrison'd round about him like a Camp
Of faithful Souldiery, were not his purpose
To use him further yet in some great service,
Not to sit idle with so great a gift
Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.
And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost,
God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.

Chor. Thy hopes are not ill founded nor seem vain
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceiv'd, agreeable to a Fathers love,
In both which we, as next participate.

Man. I know your friendly minds and----O what noise!
Mercy of Heav'n what hideous noise was that!
Horribly loud unlike the former shout.

Chor. Noise call you it or universal groan
As if the whole inhabitation perish'd,

Blood,

Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

Man. Of ruin indeed methought I heard the noise,
Oh it continues, they have slain my Son.

Chor. Thy Son is rather slaying them, that outcry
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

Man. Some dismal accident it needs must be;
What shall we do, stay here or run and see?

Chor. Best keep together here, lest running thither
We unawares run into dangers mouth.
This evil on the *Philistines* is fall'n,
From whom could else a general cry be heard?
The sufferers then will scarce molest us here,
From other hands we need not much to fear.
A little stay will bring some notice hither,
For evil news rides post, while good news baits.
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An *Ebrew*, as I guess, and of our Tribe.

Mess. O whither shall I run, or which way flie

The

The ſight of this ſo horrid ſpectacle
Which earſt my eyes beheld and yet behold;
For dire imagination ſtill perſues me.
But providence or inſtinct of nature ſeems,
Or reaſon though diſturb'd, and ſcarſe conſulted
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee firſt reverend *Manoa*, and to theſe
My Countreymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at ſome diſtance from the place of horrour,
So in the ſad event too much concern'd.

Man. The accident was loud, & heard before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not,
No Preface needs, thou ſeeſt we long to know.

Meſſ. It would burſt forth, but I recover breath
And ſenſe diſtract, to know well what I utter.

Man. Tell us the ſum, the circumſtance defer,

Meſſ. *Gaza* yet ſtands, but all her Sons are fall'n,
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fall'n.

Man. Sad, but thou knowſt to *Iſraelites* not ſaddeſt
The

the deſolation of a Hoſtile City.

Meſſ. Feed on that firſt, there may in grief be ſur-
(ſet.

Man. Relate by whom. *Meſſ.* By *Samson.*

(*Man.* That ſtill leſſens
The ſorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.

Meſſ. Ah *Manoa* I refrain, too ſuddenly
To utter what will come at laſt too ſoon;
Leſt evil tidings with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear ſhould pierce too deep.

Man. Suſpenſe in news is torture, ſpeak them out.

Meſſ. Then take the worſt in brief, *Samson* is dead.

Man. The worſt indeed, O all my hope's defeated
To free him hence! but death who ſets all free
Hath paid his ranſom now and full diſcharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd
Hopeful of his Delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the firſt-born bloom of ſpring
Nipt with the lagging rear of winters froſt.
Yet e're I give the rains to grief, ſay firſt,
How dy'd he? death to life is crown or ſhame.

All

All by him fell thou say'st, by whom fell he,
What glorious hand gave *Samson* his deaths wound?
Mess. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.
Man. Wearied with slaughter then or how? explain.
Mess. By his own hands. *Man.* Self-violence?
What cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his foes? *Mess.* Inevitable cause
At once both to destroy and be destroy'd;
The Edifice where all were met to see him
Upon thir heads and on his own he pull'd.
Man. O lastly over-strong against thy self!
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More then anough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us if thou canst,
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct.
Mess. Occasions drew me early to this City,
And as the gates I enter'd with Sun-rise,
The morning Trumpets Festival proclaim'd
Through

hrough each high street: little I had dispatch't
hen all abroad was rumour'd that this day
mson should be brought forth to shew the people
roof of his mighty strength in feats and games;
orrow'd at his captive state, but minded
ot to be absent at that spectacle.
he building was a spacious Theatre
alf round on two main Pillars vaulted high,
ith seats where all the Lords and each degree
f sort, might sit in order to behold,
he other side was op'n, where the throng
banks and scaffolds under Skie might stand;
mong these aloof obscurely stood.
he Feast and noon grew high, and Sacrifice
ad fill'd thir hearts with mirth, high chear, & wine,
hen to thir sports they turn'd. Immediately
as *Samson* as a public servant brought,
thir state Livery clad; before him Pipes
nd Timbrel's, on each side went armed guards,
Both

Both horse and foot before him and behind
Archers, and Slingers, Cataphracts and Spears.
At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the Air clamouring thir god with praise,
Who had made thir dreadful enemy thir thrall.
He patient but undaunted where they led him,
Came to the place, and what was set before him
Which without help of eye, might be assay'd,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd
All with incredible, stupendious force,
None daring to appear Antagonist.
At length for intermission sake they led him
Between the pillars; he his guide requested
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
As over-tir'd to let him lean a while
With both his arms on those two massie Pillars
That to the arched roof gave main support.
He unsuspitious led him; which when *Samson*
Felt in his arms, with head a while enclin'd,

And eyes fast fixt he stood, as one who pray'd,
Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd.
At last with head erect thus cryed aloud,
Hitherto, Lords, what your commands impos'd
I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld.
Now of my own accord such other tryal
I mean to shew you of my strength, yet greater;
As with amaze shall strike all who behold.
This utter'd, straining all his nerves he bow'd,
As with the force of winds and waters pent,
When Mountains tremble, those two massie Pillars
With horrible convulsion to and fro,
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder
Upon the heads of all who sate beneath,
Lords, Ladies, Captains, Councellors, or Priests,
Thir choice nobility and flower, not only
Of this but each *Philistian* City round

Met from all parts to ſolemnize this Feaſt.
Samson with theſe immixt, inevitably
Pulld down the ſame deſtruction on himſelf;
660 The vulgar only ſcap'd who ſtood without.

Chor. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou haſt fulfill'd
The work for which thou waſt foretold
To *Iſrael*, and now ly'ſt victorious
Among thy ſlain ſelf-kill'd
Not willingly, but tangl'd in the fold,
Of dire neceſſity, whoſe law in death conjoin'd
Thee with thy ſlaughter'd foes in number more
Then all thy life had ſlain before.

670 *Semichor.* While thir hearts were jocund and (ſublime,
Drunk with Idolatry, drunk with Wine,
And fat regorg'd of Bulls and Goats,
Chaunting thir Idol, and preferring
Before our living Dread who dwells
In *Silo* his bright Sanctuary:

Among

Among them he a ſpirit of phrenzie ſent,
Who hurt thir minds,
And urg'd them on with mad deſire
To call in haſt for thir deſtroyer;
They only ſet on ſport and play
Unweetingly importun'd
Thir own deſtruction to come ſpeedy upon them:
So fond are mortal men
Fall'n into wrath divine,
As thir own ruin on themſelves to invite,
Inſenſate left, or to ſenſe reprobate,
And with blindneſs internal ſtruck.

Semichor. But he though blind of ſight,
Deſpis'd and thought extinguiſh't quite,
With inward eyes illuminated
His fierie vertue rouz'd
From under aſhes into ſudden flame,
And as an ev'ning Dragon came,
Aſſailant on the perched rooſts,

And

And nests in order rang'd
Of tame villatic Fowl; but as an Eagle
His cloudless thunder bolted on thir heads.
So vertue giv'n for lost,
Depreſt, and overthrown, as ſeem'd,
Like that ſelf-begott'n bird
In the *Arabian* woods emboſt,
That no ſecond knows nor third,
And lay e're while a Holocauſt,
From out her aſhie womb now teem'd,
Revives, reflouriſhes, then vigorous moſt
When moſt unactive deem'd,
And though her body die, her fame ſurvives,
A ſecular bird ages of lives.

Man. Come, come, no time for lamentation now,
Nor much more cauſe, *Samſon* hath quit himſelf
Like *Samſon*, and heroicly hath finiſh'd
A life Heroic, on his Enemies
Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,

And

And lamentation to the Sons of *Caphtor*
Through all *Philiſtian* bounds. To *Iſrael*
Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them
Find courage to lay hold on this occaſion,
To himſelf and Fathers houſe eternal fame;
And which is beſt and happieſt yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was feard,
But favouring and aſſiſting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breaſt, no weakneſs, no contempt,
Diſpraiſe, or blame, nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death ſo noble.
Let us go find the body where it lies
Sok't in his enemies blood, and from the ſtream
With lavers pure and cleanſing herbs waſh off
The clotted gore. I with what ſpeed the while
(*Gaza* is not in plight to ſay us nay)
Will ſend for all my kindred, all my friends
To fetch him hence and ſolemnly attend

With

With silent obsequie and funeral train
Home to his Fathers house : there will I build him
A Monument, and plant it round with shade
Of Laurel ever green, and branching Palm,
With all his Trophies hung, and Acts enroll'd
In copious Legend, or sweet Lyric Song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame thir breasts
To matchless valour, and adventures high ;
The Virgins also shall on feastful days
Visit his Tomb with flowers, only bewailing
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

Chor. All is best, though we oft doubt,
What th' unsearchable dispose
Of highest wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns

And

And to his faithful Champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously ; whence *Gaza* mourns
And all that band them to resist
His uncontroulable intent,
His servants he with new acquist
Of true experience from this great event
With peace and consolation hath dismist,
And calm of mind all passion spent.

THE END.

Omissa.

Page 89 after verse 537. which ends, *Not much to fear*, insert these.

What if his eye-sight (for to *Israels* God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restor'd,
He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way?

Man. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

Chor. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?

Man. He can I know, but doubt to think he will;
Yet Hope would fain subscribe, and tempts Belief.

After the next verse which begins, *A little stay*, insert this.

Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;

Then follows in order, *For evil news*, &c.

Errata in the former Poem.

PAge 4. verse 62. after being no stop, p.13. verse 226. for destroy, r. *subdue*, p. 21. v.373. for demuring, r. *demurring*, p. 22. v. 400. for never, r. *nearer*, p.23. v.407. for Imports, r. *Imparts*, p.35. v.127. after threat'ns, insert *then*, p.44.v.313. for Thebes, r. *Thebez*, p.46.v.341. for pill'd, r. *pil'd*, p. 47. v. 371. no comma after knowledge, but after works, p.71. v. 323. for shower, r. *showers*, p. 83. v. 102. no stop after victor.

Errata in the latter Poem.

PAge 16. verse 127. for Irresistable, r. *Irresistible*, p. 17. v. 158. for complain'd, r. *complain*, p. 21. v. 222. for mention'd, r. *motion'd*, p. 28 v.355. before, such r. *And*, p.43.v.657. no stop at the end, p.44.v.661. for to, r. *with*, p.75. v.259. for divulg'd, r. *divulge*, p.78.v.324. for race r. *rate*, p.79. v.336. for Mimirs, r. *Mimics*, p.90. v.553. for heard r. *here*.

N